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SENSATIONAL FIRST LOOK AT  
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MORE TESTED INSIDE!

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SEPTEMBER 2000 ISSUE 15  
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Wes Watanabe. Skateboarder. Nike Long Sleeve Statement Top.  
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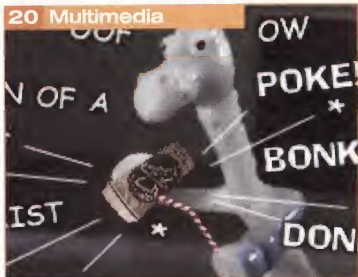
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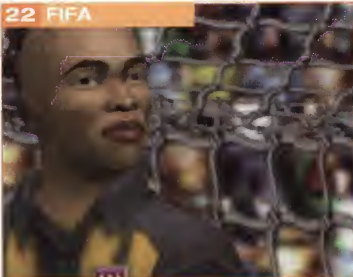
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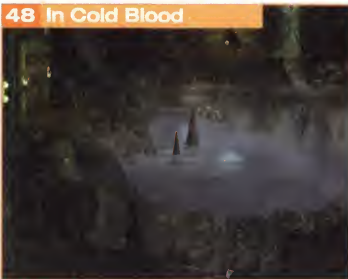
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We get a lot of strange letters from a lot of strange people every month. We try to answer all of our readers' questions, no matter how bizarre.

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### 92 BUYERS' GUIDE

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### 96 CRITICS' CIRCLE

This is where we take a serious look at the broader issues that affect the world of PlayStation gaming. This month, we go over the hallmarks of sloppy game design, the telltale signs that a developer wants your cash more than your happiness.

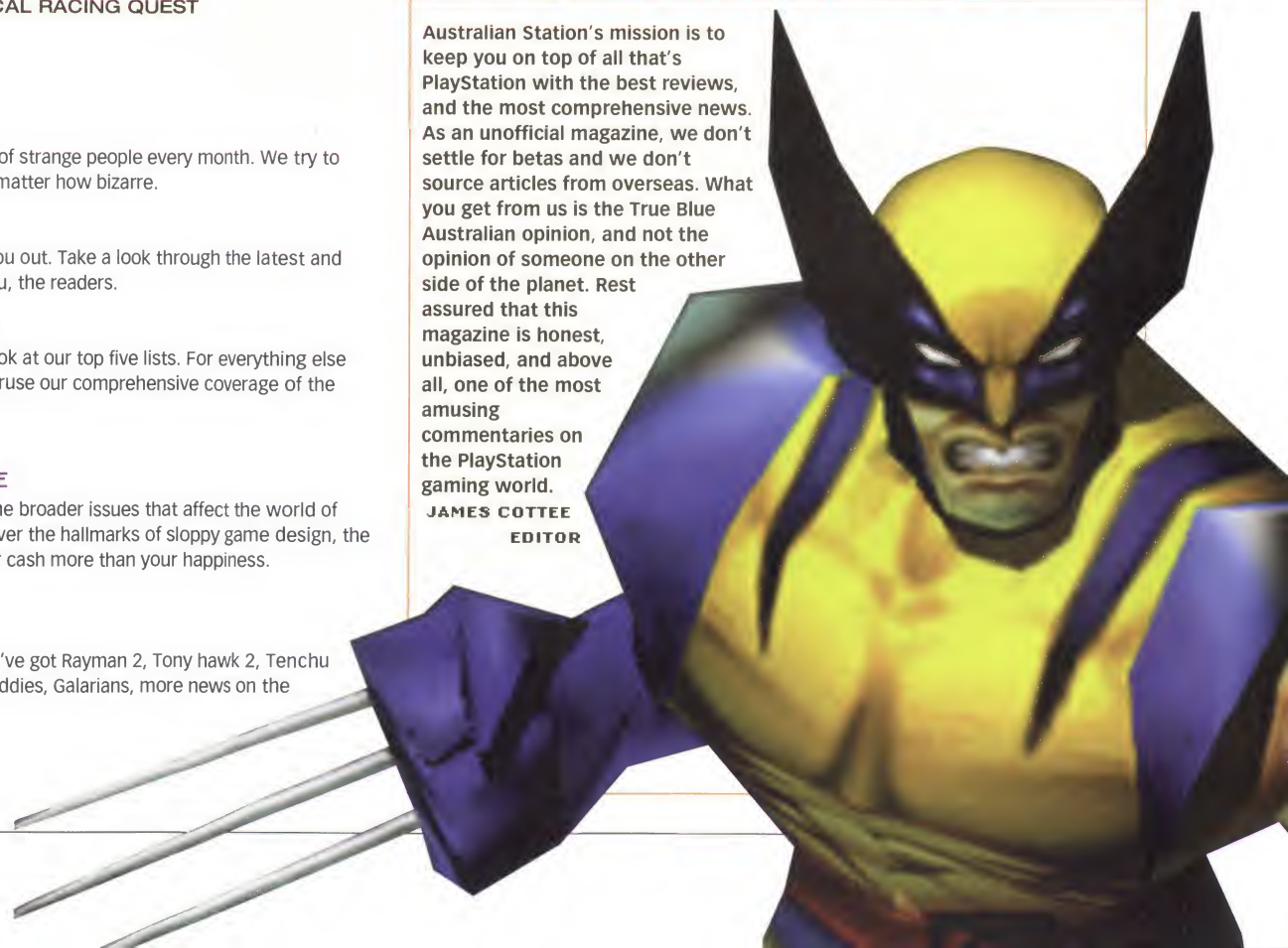
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## OUR PROMISE TO YOU!

Australian Station's mission is to keep you on top of all that's PlayStation with the best reviews, and the most comprehensive news. As an unofficial magazine, we don't settle for betas and we don't source articles from overseas. What you get from us is the True Blue Australian opinion, and not the opinion of someone on the other side of the planet. Rest assured that this magazine is honest, unbiased, and above all, one of the most amusing commentaries on the PlayStation gaming world.

JAMES COTTEE  
EDITOR





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All of the following articles are fictional and any similarity to any PlayStation games, either real or imaginary, is purely coincidental.



This Atari factory has seen better days...

## ARE YOU KEEPING UP WITH THE COMMODORE?

I've seen it all before.

Left and right you can see people fretting, speculating wildly, pacing back and forth as they frantically try and get a mental grip on what will happen to the games industry when the PlayStation2 is introduced. Will it kill all interest in the PSX, sending the industry into a slide? Will cheap software for the regular PlayStation broadside the PS2? Will technical limitations cause the new machine to stumble and fall, taking Sony's hopes with it? Or could it utterly dominate the gaming scene, creating a content and stagnant market?

Everyone was asking similar questions back in '85 when the Amiga came out. Was Commodore sabotaging its thriving C64 market by releasing superior machine? Was the world ready for the power of the Amiga? On and on they went, going around in circles and ignoring that fact that the systems co-existed in the marketplace quite happily, and that games for each got better every day. Indeed, those who remember that era consider it a golden age of game evolution, even now that the Commodore company itself is dead and buried.

No, both of Sony's consoles will thrive. The public believes in them, and the new pantheon of icons like Crash and Solid Snake

are now synonymous with video game quality. The future of gaming is bright, and the future is PlayStation.

I'm James Cottee, by the way. Long standing readers may remember me being on this magazine for about a year now, but fate has finally called me forth to the editor's chair. Just in time for the PS2 revolution, no less. It's going to be fantastic, even if there is a sense of déjà vu...

**James Cottee**  
Editor

## MEET THE AUSTRALIAN STATION TEAM

Meet our hardened team of video game verterans



**James Cottee**

**Specialises in:**  
Strategy, action, retro, and various witty remarks.

**Currently hooked on**  
Terracon



**Rod Gall**

**Specialises in:**  
Shooters, adventure games and wry looks.

**Currently hooked on**  
Bushido Blade



**Kevin Cheung**

**Specialises in:**  
Sports, racing, shoot 'em ups and obscure anime trivia.

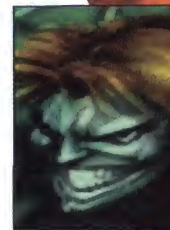
**Currently hooked on**  
Dead or Alive 2



**Andrew Rogers**

**Specialises in:**  
Cheesy music, cheesy games and cheese.

**Currently hooked on**  
Vib Ribbon



**Leon Tranter**

**Specialises in:**  
Racing, fighting, philosophy, and pong.

**Currently hooked on**  
Tekken Tag



**Amos Wong**

**Specialises in:**  
Fighting games, strategy, RPGs and anything Japanese.

**Currently hooked on**  
Vagrant Story





# THE FEW. THE PROUD. THE MUTANTS.

Train with fellow mutants and fight your way up the ranks, learning amazing mutant moves and using your special powers to dominate super-villains. It's boot camp for fighters... and only the strongest will survive. Professor X wants you!



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Screen shots taken from PlayStation® game console gameplay.  
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# PlayStation Update

## NEWS AND INFORMATION

All the latest in current events from the world of PlayStation

## PSone: Made in Taiwan?

Sony considering outsourcing of PlayStation production

**Sony is struggling to manufacture enough PlayStation2s for the worldwide launch of the console on October 26th, according to a recent statement by Sony Japan. Since Sony's domestic manufacturing capabilities are being pushed to the limit by the PS2 preparations, they're considering moving PlayStation production off shore to free up local factories for the PS2 push.**

While Sony had hoped to push production levels up to two million a month for the new console by now, they themselves admit that they've only been able to meet 80% of their previously stated half a million a month capacity. This may see them fall short of their stated goal of having made the first ten million of them by March 2001.

If supplies are short when October comes around, does this mean that potential customers will go without? Probably not. Sony by and large know what they're doing, and even if they don't meet their production targets they'll come pretty close.

Also, keep in mind that this is still a brand new video game

system, and traditionally only a small sector of the population called "early adopters" rush out and buy these as soon as they're released. Anyone still concerned should take the first opportunity they see to pre-order the console, and if you do so through an official Sony web site, all the better.



New from Sun - a PS2 modem!

Sun Electronics has announced they are developing a modem add-on for the PlayStation2. Called the OnlineStation, it will connect to a USB port on the PS2 and allow for 56K access to the internet, email and online

gaming. They're also developing software to make it run, and expect to be selling the device, in the northern hemisphere at least, by the end of the year. It looks like the online revolution will begin sooner than we thought...



Still no word on if or when Sony will provide wireless gaming locally



# Sony join Linux consortium

Sony dedicates its next generation of gadgetry to open source

In a move that will doubtless affect the gadgets and accessories you can look forward to using with your PS2, Sony has joined together with every other major Japanese electronics firm (except for Matsushita) to form the Japan Embedded Linux Consortium. This new group, in association with TurboLinux of America, will develop a form of the Linux operating system suitable for use in the next generation of mobile phones, home electronics, car navigation systems, industrial machinery, and just about

any device where there is scope for computer control.

The objective of this is to cut manufacturing costs by creating an industry standard. Linux is an excellent operating system to choose, because it is stable, modular, and completely open source. This means that while a company like Microsoft may closely guard the secrets of its Windows OS, and thus stifle its development, the source code for Linux is freely available for anyone in the world to peruse, comment on and improve.

PlayStation2 development kits already run on Linux, and enthusiasts of the fully customisable operating system

are doubtless thrilled at the news. It gets its name from its creator, Linus Torvalds, who set out with the intention of porting the powerful UNIX operating system for home use. As for the penguin, the ubiquitous symbol of this underground phenomenon, it was designed to represent contentment at having just stuffed itself with herring as a metaphor for the overall satisfaction of Linux users.

If Sony manages to engorge itself with the lion's share of tomorrow's video game market, then it may want to think about changing its logo!



## WACKY RACES

That's right, another cartoon from the dawn of time...

Hanna Barbera, in addition to the Scooby Doo game coming out later this year, have licensed yet another of their cartoon franchises to appear on the PlayStation. The Wacky Races, for those of you who remember, was a series where cartoon show mainstays and forgotten 70s celebrities alike belted across rapidly repeating landscapes in a weekly quest for the blue ribbon and glory. Showcasing characters like Penelope Pitstop, Dick Dastardly, Mutley, and those gangsters who looked like the seven dwarves, most 20 somethings and older should vaguely remember this series as being one of the primary influences in their formative years.

It's also playing on pay TV. The upcoming game of the same name sets out to capture the look and feel of the series in polygons, and from what we've seen so far they're hitting pretty close to the mark. Of course, without actually playing it we can't tell if this will provide an excellent mix of weapon-based racing or join the massive list of novelty racing game flops, but for now have a look at these screens and try to imagine what it means to race in a wacky fashion. More information as it comes to hand.



## Postcard from Japan

Australian Station takes time out to visit Sony in Tokyo

We have braved vast distances, subtitled in-flight movies and the high prices at Tokyo Starbucks to bring you this tidbit of news from the land of the rising sun. The Sony building in Tokyo represents six floors of PR heaven, level after level of cameras, flat panel TVs, computers, stereos and of course video game systems. The top level of the facility was fully decked out with PlayStation2s, each one playing a different launch or recent release title. Some looked rather spiffy, like Fantavision and Dead Or Alive 2, and some looked a little more half-baked, like a derivative wrestling game, and more interactive storybooks than you could shake a controller at.

The staff, while polite, towed the company line quite well. Not only were there no PS2 consoles for sale, we were assured that none could be found for love or money in the whole of Tokyo. They even

went to the trouble of showing us an English-language version of the Japanese law that states that PS2s are technically military hardware.

But a quick survey of the back streets of Shinjuku proved that PS2s were indeed still on sale, and the local retailers seemed rather over the whole deal. We were elated all the same, and now James has his very own PlayStation 2 to gloat about (Actually, I was more excited about finally getting some authentic Transformers T-shirts - ed.).

Throughout the city we saw PS2 software for sale alongside DVDs, the connection being very strong in the minds of retailers and customers alike. Unlike the situation locally, the Dreamcast seems to be going fairly well in Japan, but we know from sales statistics that PS2 sales have already overtaken all the progress Sega has made since 1998.

We can expect this pattern to be repeated down here.



# BUDGET CONTROLLERS

Can't afford another Dual Shock? Then try a third party controller

**T**he Sony Dual Shock Controller is an excellent piece of hardware, but it has one or two shortcomings. Many have complained about the fiddly nature of the directional pad, and it has also been criticised on ergonomic grounds. Breaking the psychological fifty-buck barrier has never worked in its favour either, and there was a small backlash when Sony announced a year ago that the Dual Shock would become the standard controller for the PlayStation.

Praise be then for third-party manufacturers and their thoughtfully designed

controllers. Visible on this page are the Logic 3 Challenger Pad, the Gamester analogue JOYPAD, and the Mad Catz Dual Force. All three offer auto-fire modes, d-pads that don't hurt your thumb, and a price advantage of ten bucks or more. Our personal favourite would be the Mad Catz controller. It's significantly easier to hold than the Sony Dual Shock, and it also has funky rubberised grips on the underside that make holding the unit a pleasure in itself. The others are still worth a look though, as they all work, and you can't argue with the price.



## The Strangest Freebie

### Wonka Confectionery Cornucopia

**I**f there's one thing that marketing people love, it's re-badging. As a central component of the shamanistic religion they use to control big-business, they love nothing more than to cast their chicken bones, gaze into a crystal ball and swear blind that sales will rise if company X changes its logo from a circle to a square.

Nestle are big fans of this technique. Once upon a time they had a drinking chocolate called "Nestle's Ever-Ready Cocoa." This sounded too much like drinking battery acid however, so in the 50s they promptly changed this to "Nestle's Quik." Then recently they decided they weren't pushing the word

Nestle hard enough, so now kids across the land drink "Nestle's Nesquik." The powder in the tin, of course, is exactly the same.

Now a whole range of "Wonka" products have appeared on the shelves, suggesting the by sheer force of will Mr Willy Wonka himself has broken out of the land of fiction to give the children of the real world the pleasure of consuming his excellent range of chocolates and candies. But closer examination of the packaging of these items reveals that many of them, such as Nerds and Dweebs, existed already, and have simply had Wonka's name, top hat and registered trade mark symbol slapped across them.

The timing of this little

press pack from Nestle is a little ironic, as it coincides with the release of Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory on DVD. The movie showcases the Scrumdiddliumtious bar, the Everlasting Gobstopper, and of course the basic Wonka chocolate bar, none of which are available from Nestle. They do have a chocolate bar called K-BOOM, with the novelty feature of sort of fizzling and crackling in your throat after you eat it, but it's more whack than wacky. Basically, the chocolate lineup just isn't strong enough to warrant carrying the Wonka name. For its unusual sense of timing, this grab bag of sweets wins the title of The Strangest Freebie of the Month.







now with  
*real.  
fruit*



**TASTE TO THE LIMIT**



# Competitions

This competition will close on the 30th September 2000

## VIB RIBBON

The unique line dancing game can be yours



Music comes alive in the bizarre world of Vib Ribbon. The potential for aural adventure in this game is unlimited, because the levels are defined by the music CDs you insert to generate them. The world Vibri the rabbit inhabits is a simple one, but made strangely enticing by the subtle dancing of waveforms in the darkness.

In short, we love it!

Thanks to Sony we have five Vib Ribbon packs to give away this month. Each lucky winner will not only get a copy of the game, but also an exclusive Vib Ribbon Hawaiian shirt! You could be one of the five most stylish persons in the country!

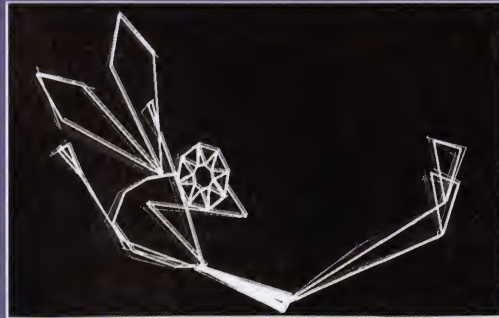
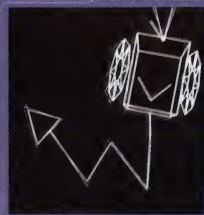
All you have to do to win is answer the following question:

What song do you think would create the strangest patterns in Vib Ribbon?

Write your answer, along with your name and address on the back of an envelope and send it to:

### Vib Ribbon Competition

C/O- Station Magazine  
78 Renwick St  
Redfern NSW 2016  
Australia



## GAUNTLET LEGENDS

Retro gaming up for grabs

This arcade hit was a remake of the retro classic, a tale of swords and sorcery in a land overrun with the forces of evil! You and heroic companions must battle through armies of orcs, goblins, the undead, and even demons. Fear not, there are magical objects to be found on your way, vast quantities of gold and food, and when the satanic overlord is finally destroyed, the feeling of satisfaction at a job well done.

Gauntlet Legends is truly an epic experience, but it may not be necessary to pay for it. That's right, we recognise the valour that lies inside each and every one of you, and so do Ozisoft, because they're giving away five copies of the game to the most noble of our readers.

All you have to do to win is answer the following question:

If you were a mythical warrior, what would your name and title be?

Write your answer, along with your name and address on the back of an envelope and send it to:

### Gauntlet Legends Competition

C/O- Station Magazine  
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Australia



AND THE WINNERS ARE... CONTROL YOUR FEAR COMP! SCOTT JOHNSON (NSW), DAMIAN SI (WA), ADAM HARVEY LEIGH (QLD), BRENDAN LOOPER (VIC), TIFFANY BARROW (VIC), MEDIEVIL 2 COMP! JASON COOPER (WA), TIM ROSENZWEIG (SA), MAUREEN NORRIS (VIC), BROOK PIELAK-JONES (NT), S.L. WAINWRIGHT (QLD).



# Make a Killing



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All of the latest in video entertainment



### The Black Adder: Series One

Before he made Mr Bean Rowan Atkinson co-wrote and starred in what's possibly the best TV comedy series ever made. It tells an alternate history of Britain, tainted by the self-styled Black Adder and his descendants. Aside from the incredible writing and top-notch comic talent, Black Adder gains from depicting a national history far too strange and sordid to have been made up. It's the late 15th century, and Edmund, Prince of the Realm soon finds that there's more to a powerplay than black wardrobe and an obscene codpiece. This is the first season all on one disc, and for the British comedy fan this is a Must Have.

CONTENT: 9/10 DISC: 5/10



### Bicentennial Man

Robin Williams stars in this interpretation of the classic Isaac Asimov story. Andrew may look like a normal humanoid robot, but his self-aware positronic brain will lead him on a 200 year journey to become human. This is a Touchstone movie though, so Asimov's leanings towards pure science have been swept under a carpet of family values and feel-good vistas of a utopian America of the future.

Features: Dual layer disc, Theatrical trailer, Making-of featurette, Isolated soundtrack, Talent profiles, Trailers for other Robin Williams movies.

MOVIE: 8/10

DISC: 7/10

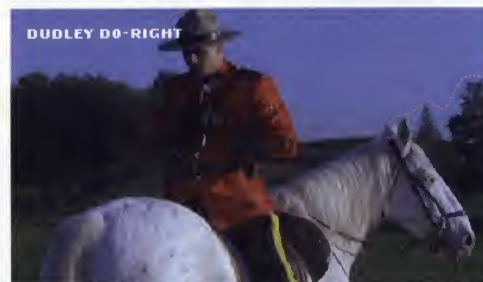
### Dick

This is an unusual mix of slapstick comedy and rosy-eyed political retrospective. Suppose two ditzy teenage girls stumbled onto the secret of Watergate. Then suppose Nixon got them to walk his dog to keep them quiet. Then they give him hash cookies to keep him quiet. Then add a lot of jokes about the word "dick." You'd get this movie.

Features: Dual layer disc, Making-of documentary, Deleted scene, Audio commentary by director Andrew Fleming and co-writer Sheryl Longin, Isolated soundtrack with music highlights menu, Bloopers reel, Theatrical trailer, Talent Profiles

MOVIE: 6/10

DISC: 9/10



### Dudley Do-Right

This was a cartoon from the era of Rocky and Bullwinkle and Roger Ramjet. Developing a live action movie based on a franchise with a largely deceased fan base is an ambitious task, and it's a credit to the producers that they came up with a movie as good as they did. Unfortunately, despite the excellent pre-feature cartoon and the presence of Eric Idle, this Brendan Fraser vehicle just doesn't work too well.

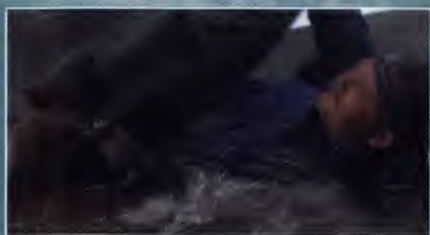
Features: Dual layer disc, DVD ROM features, Production notes, Cast and Filmmakers' notes

MOVIE: 6/10

DISC: 8/10



## Movie of the month



### Jaws 25th Anniversary Edition

This movie and its 3 sequels cashed in on the 70s fad of undersea exploration and mankind's primal fear of sharks in one neat package, and did so with spectacular effect at the box office. It's a credit then to Spielberg's directing on this occasion that the movie itself is still gripping 25 years later, after times and paranoias have changed. It's summer, and the seaside community of Amity Island has to weigh the possibility of shark attacks against its commercial future. Some spectacular butchery at the teeth of a supernaturally evil shark later and three men find themselves on a quest to catch the errant great white before it can kill again. Depending on how squeamish you are, Jaws is either terrifying or hilarious, but either way this film grips you by your flailing limbs and doesn't let go.

Features: Dual layer disc, 50 minute making-of documentary, Deleted Scenes and outtakes, Trivia game, "Shark World" facts, Production photos and storyboards, Theatrical trailers, Screen savers, Production notes, Cast and Filmmakers notes

MOVIE 9/10

DISC 10/10







Demi Moore

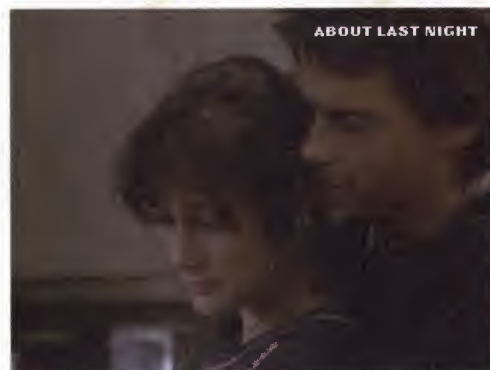


### St Elmo's Fire

This 1985 landmark is perhaps the single most important Brat Pack motion picture. Emilio Estevez, Rob Lowe, Andrew McCarthy, Judd Nelson, Ally Sheedy, Mare Winingham and of course Demi Moore star as a close-knit group of college graduates in their early twenties. Set against the backdrop of Washington DC, their ideas of their future adult lives unravel in a melodramatic yet curiously addictive manner.

Features: Audio commentary by director Joel Schumacher, Trailers for *Mortal Thoughts* and *About Last Night*, Talent profiles

MOVIE: 7/10 DISC: 5/10



ABOUT LAST NIGHT

### About Last Night

Demi Moore, Rob Lowe and James Belushi in a lightweight 80s drama about commitment, relationships, boys, girls, the protocol of courting and most importantly outrageous haircuts. Rob and Demi's characters think they're just having a quick fling, but before you can spell blow wave they're manifesting deep, fuzzy feelings for each other. Then it sort of goes nowhere.

Features: Talent profiles, Theatrical trailer, Trailer for *Mortal Thoughts*

MOVIE: 6/10

DISC: 3/10

### Mortal Thoughts

It's interesting to note from an historical perspective that the spikey hair and costume jewelry one associates with the high 80s still persists in this '91 feature. Bruce Willis, abusive husband, turns up dead one morning. Demi Moore and her best friend are prime suspects, but can they keep the grisly, sordid, chilling secret of the previous evenings events under wraps?

Features: Theatrical Trailer, Talent profiles, Trailer for *About Last Night*

MOVIE: 6/10

DISC: 3/10



MORTAL THOUGHTS

### The Seventh Sign

Epic, eerie, and eminently sample-able, this is an understated depiction of the eternal battle between good and evil, and how Demi Moore's character finds herself witness to the prelude to the apocalypse. If there are no more souls in Heaven, as a mysterious drifter suggests, then her unborn son will be still-born. While he can freeze cities and boil fish, the devil should know better than to get between Demi Moore and her maternal instincts. A frantic race to stop the inevitable leads to the big question - can love change the world?

Features: Talent Profiles, Trailers for other Demi Moore movies

MOVIE: 5/10

DISC: 2/10



THE SEVENTH SIGN



ABOUT LAST NIGHT



THE SEVENTH SIGN



THE SEVENTH SIGN





### Eyes Wide Shut

Stanley Kubrick's last movie is probably not his greatest, but it's gripping viewing regardless. Tom Cruise, happily married New York doctor, begins to suspect his wife is cheating on him. This vivid imagination leads him on a quest through a seedy underworld and straight into the bizarre sex rituals of the fabulously rich. Multilayered, deep, deceptive, scary, and of course sexy, *Eyes Wide Shut* is worth multiple viewings to get every last drop of nuance out of it. And of course you can freeze frame on Nicole Kidman's arse if you so choose.

Features: Dual layer disc, Interviews with Tom Cruise, Nicole Kidman and Steven Spielberg, TV spots

**MOVIE: 9/10 DISC: 7/10**



### END OF DAYS

### End Of Days

Arnie versus Satan on the eve of the new millennium. How can you go wrong? Well, you could have a lot of dark, muddled imagery, no sense of pacing or drama, below par one-liners and an overall concept that can't decide if it's an action movie or Exorcist IV. You can't make everyone happy, and *End Of Days* is a prime example of how such motivations go wrong.

Features: Making-of documentaries, Theatrical trailer, Director's commentary, Music videos "So Long" by Everlast and "Superbeast" by Rob Zombie, Biographies

**MOVIE: 5/10**

**DISC: 6/10**



### FORTRESS 2: RE-ENTRY

### Fortress 2: Re-Entry

Christopher Lambert, multi-lingual, multi-talented and star of countless B-grade shockers reprises his role as an elite special forces agent thrown in a ultra-high security prison, though this time the twist is it's high in orbit above the Earth. This is much more camp than the first *Fortress*, and despite the fact it doesn't have Warwick Capper it's still excellent beer-and-pizza fare.

Features: Theatrical trailer, Making-of featurette, Talent profiles

**MOVIE: 6/10**

**DISC: 4/10**



### FORTRESS 2: RE-ENTRY



### MUPPETS FROM SPACE

### Muppets From Space

This, the sixth Muppet movie, plays down some of the Muppets' more adult concepts in favour of an exploration of Gonzo's motivations and sense of identity in the cosmos. It turns out he's an alien, and a secretive government agency wants to suck his brains out.

Features: Dual ratio disc, Theatrical trailers, Deleted scenes, Music video "Shining Star" by the Dust Brothers, Audio and video commentary by director Tim Hill, Kermit, Rizzo and Gonzo, Talent profiles, trailers for other "family" titles

**MOVIE: 7/10**

**DISC: 7/10**





### Mystery Men

Based on the Dark Horse comic book, this is an instant cult classic.

Champion City's superhero Captain Amazing is kidnapped, and only a motley troupe of wannabe superheroes can stop Cassanova Frankenstein from destroying the city. This team who can't even decide the name of their super group have some rather ordinary powers, such as The Shoveller, Mr Furious (who's power is getting really angry) Invisible Boy (his power only works if no-one is watching) and the deadly precision farts of The Spleen. Cast with America's finest comic talent, Mystery Men gets better every time you see it!

Features: Dual layer disc, Making-of documentary, Feature commentary with director Kinka Usher, Deleted scenes, The origin of the "Mystery Men" comic book characters, Theatrical trailer, Music highlights, DVD ROM features, Production notes, Cast & Filmmaker's notes

MOVIE : 9/10

DISC : 9/10



### The Muppets Take Manhattan

This has stood the test of time better than most movies from the early eighties, and chronicles the adventures of the Muppets, recent college graduates, who want to put their final year musical on Broadway. This is the true ideal of a "family" movie, as it's got something for everyone and isn't condescending in the least. Your typical New York travelogue, with plenty of sight gags to spare.

Features: Theatrical trailer, Trailer for Muppets From Space

MOVIE : 8/10

DISC : 9/10



### Simon Sez

What do you get when you mix three sidekicks, two babes, one maniac bent on world domination and Dennis Rodman? A very unusual comedy shot in France, Simon Sez depicts the adventures of a secret agent working for an ill-defined official body who together with the techno monks who supply him with warez find themselves at the crux of a plot kind of like Hudson Hawk, but without that movies budget or credibility.

Features: Theatrical trailer, Talent profile

MOVIE : 5/10

DISC : 2/10



### Snow Falling On Cedars

It's 1950, and crippled war veteran Ishmael must confront his prejudice against his Japanese American ex for scorning him years previously and for being of the same ethnic group that cost him his arm. This is slow, cerebral stuff, and the ironically excessive use of monochrome almost makes this a black and white movie.

Features: Dual layer disc, Making-of documentary, Audio commentary by director Scott Hicks, Deleted scenes, History of Manzanar Internment Camp, Theatrical trailer, Web link, Production notes

MOVIE : 7/10

DISC : 9/10



### THREE KINGS



#### Three Kings

Desert Storm has just ended, and George Clooney and two washed-up rap stars decide that "rescuing" some Kuwaiti bullion would be an excellent way to shore up their retirement schemes. The ads made this out to be "Bad Boys Vs Saddam," but it's surreal imagery and anti-war stance makes it more of a cross between Platoon and Fight Club.

Features: Dual layer disc, Biographies & interviews with cast and crew, Theatrical trailers and featurettes, Deleted scenes, Commentaries, DVD ROM features

**MOVIE: 7/10**

**DISC: 10/10**

### WALKING WITH DINOSAURS



#### Walking With Dinosaurs

While Disney's latest CG blockbuster may still be doing the rounds with its sentimental and highly inaccurate look at dinosaur society, this BBC documentary series has been making waves with its

objective, scientific approach. It's like a nature documentary, combining accurate computer models, precision puppetry and the latest theories on what the dinosaurs were and what they did while they ruled the Earth.

Features: Two dual layer discs, Behind the scenes picture-in-picture sequences, Additional graphics, Director's commentary

**CONTENT: 8/10**

**DISC: 8/10**



#### Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory

This musical comedy from 1971 is a timeless classic, with Gene Wilder cast as the reclusive yet brilliant chocolate tycoon Willy Wonka. Five kids from around the world have won tickets on an exclusive tour of the Wonka factory, and a lifetime supply of chocolate! But will their own greed destroy them before they can claim their prize? With incredible sets, catchy musical numbers and memorable performances, this is not only a film that does justice to the book but a contender for the title of Best Children's Movie Ever. NOTE: Take special care to regulate your brain chemistry before watching; The Umpa Lumpas are really freaky.

Features: None

**MOVIE: 9/10 DISC: 1/10**







### ANIME CENTRE: COWBOY BEBOP

This was the biggest cartoon series on Japanese TV in '98, and it's easy to see why. The designers behind this show obviously wanted to combine as many cool concepts as they could think of into one package, and they pulled it off without a hitch. The setting is a distant future in which mankind has spread throughout the solar system. The story revolves around a band of freelance bounty hunters who try to keep the unlimited supply of dangerous criminals in the universe under control.

The character designs are incredible, and the frequent use of computer graphics with the cell animation makes for some amazing visuals. The plots are minimalist, quirky and keep you guessing. The combination of hard science fiction with almost noir-like plots gives the viewer an impression of the vast expanse of the cosmos. And to top it off they've made everything as cool as possible. For instance, a casino floating in space is shaped like a giant roulette wheel!

And this isn't even counting all the sex and violence. Cowboy Bebop rides on the back of an incredible jazz soundtrack, and represents essential viewing for anime fans everywhere.



### CABLE CENTRE: STARSHIP TROOPERS

Combining the best aspects of both the book and the film, Starship Troopers is now the subject of a computer-animated cartoon show now playing on the Fox Kids Channel. Join Rico and the elite Roughnecks unit in their war against the bugs. Great visuals, great stories, great fun!



### ON THE WEB: WWW.LEISURETOWN.COM

For a disturbing journey into the blackest areas of the human soul, look no further than this web site. Someone with a camera and a collection of Gumby-like bendy-characters has created an epic comic series called Leisure Town. Blown up to human size, and cast in real world settings, these seemingly innocent characters live out pathetic, hollow lives eerily similar to our own. Every character is unemployed, world-weary, or at the very least a complete bastard. The stories are far too real to be entirely made up, and one can't help but suspect that they are at least partly autobiographical.

At the very least it's an amazing look at a tortured soul, but read too much and your mind might start playing tricks on you. Some of the revelations within strike a little bit too close to home...





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# FIFA SOCCER WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

EA Sports makes an impressive first showing on the PlayStation 2

## PS2 FACTS

- Publisher  
Electronic Arts
- Developer  
EA Sports
- Genre  
Sports
- Release Date  
TBA
- Expectations  
Classic FIFA  
gameplay, but  
nothing that  
spectacular

## ALTERNATIVES

- World Soccer 2000  
(Konami)



*You can just feel the tension, can't you?*



*Wow, nice socks*



*Black socks - be the envy of your friends*



*The poetry of the soccer player in motion is like fine ballet*

It must be confusing to be a game developer. Whether it's a fighting game, an RPG, or adventure, critics and consumers alike meticulously pick apart every little detail of their art and champion the quirkiest of niche titles they'd least expect. Give them a sport they love, and all is magically forgiven.

EA Sports is an institution, especially for PlayStation owners, for whom the company provided the most comprehensive quality coverage of games in the sporting genre. It almost doesn't matter that NBA Live or Madden is critically acclaimed as the best in its field - anyone who's into the sports just plays them. And only because they feel like they're really playing the game. That's what being a sports fan is all about.

### MORE OF THE SAME GOODNESS?

With such history, it goes without saying that expectations are riding high for EA's promised sports line-up once the PlayStation 2 is launched locally. FIFA Soccer World Championship is their first stab at Sony's incredible new hardware, and no matter how this title turns out, the soccer fans amongst you can take comfort in the fact that EA Sports intends to make revisions and improvements for the official Western launch.

FIFA Soccer World Championship offers several standard game modes. They include Exhibition, World Cup, U-23 World





*This man looks down on his luck. What he really needs are some nice new socks*



*"Hey, look at my socks!"*



*Not unlike those table games, really*



*That's no fish he's talking about*



*"I've been watching your socks, young man"*

Championship, League, and Training. There's also a Team Management mode that lets you dig your fingers into the micro-management aspects of offensive strategy and so on.

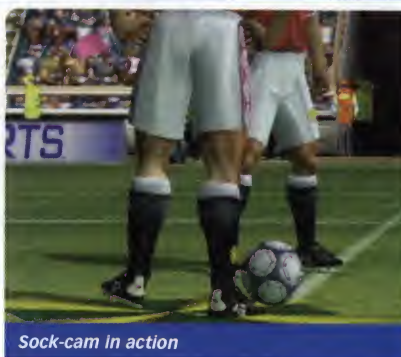
There are a bundle of teams to pick for each mode. You can pick a specific team from the English, Spanish, German, and Italian leagues, or select one of 45 international teams such as Brazil, Cameroon, China, or Australia. Once a team and game mode is chosen, it's really just a case of playing till you win.

Dual Shock 2 = Control interface 2?

EA Sports hasn't made use of the new analogue properties of the Dual Shock 2 buttons, but the soccer matches themselves are classic FIFA: simple, watertight, and absolute. The analogue thumbstick lets you dribble the ball at various speeds, ranging from a slow trot to running full stride. Pressing the turbo button will give you a little extra burst at those important moments.

The passing system has undergone some revision - the newest feature being a colour-coded arrow at the players' feet. When you're in control of the ball, a small arrow will automatically point towards the nearest player on your team who's in the direction you're pushing the thumbstick. If it's green, then it means the player is open. Yellow indicates that the player is covered, and red means you run a high risk of interception if you attempt the pass. There's also the more traditional radar system at the bottom of the screen, which still works well for fielding lob passes.

For the more talented strikers, the real fun starts with all the acrobatic moves that are operated with the shoulder buttons. Spins, side-steps, and over-the-shoulder passes are all possible, and can be used to trample the fragile egos of your friends if timed correctly. It seems a little odd, however, that there aren't any other moves beyond that, meaning everyone has the same 'standard' moves. It also raises questions about signature moves for specific players.



*Sock-cam in action*

**JAMIROQUAI?! ERR...**

Of course, all of this action would be meaningless if it didn't look any good. In the presentation stakes, FIFA Soccer World Championship should have every fan of an EA Sports title salivating with anticipation for what may come in the future. The opening FMV is in wonderfully high resolution, almost DVD quality, which is made possible since the PS2 doesn't have any of the VRAM constraints of the PlayStation. The rapid-fire choreography of live-action and CG soccer footage as Jamiroquai's 'Canned Heat' delights your ears with rich multi-channel surround sound goodness leaves you in no doubt that you're not playing a simple PlayStation anymore. Devoted soccer fans are also sure to pick up on the presence of Japanese soccer sensation, Hidetoshi Nakata, who helped provide many of the incredible motion-capture animations.

However, that's not really a good representation of the game's substantive graphical quality. At best, it can be described as inconsistent. On one hand, the players look great and animate smoothly. Their new high-resolution look will undoubtedly look incredible to the PlayStation faithful, and is at least a cause for some relief to those who've been jealously looking at the hi-res graphics of PC or Dreamcast games. However, they don't look anywhere near 'life-like'. They look like the same marionettes we've played before with a higher polygon count and more clarity. The problem is really in the textures, which don't have enough detail to make it look like a real person. That said, don't expect players who look like the real thing.

As for the stadium, FIFA Soccer World Championship is another example of the new aesthetic in using light and accentuated shadows to bring life to the motion and the

**PS2**  
FEATURES



Memory Card



1 to 4  
Players



Dual Shock  
Compatible





With each player wearing two pairs of socks, this team is ready for anything!



Dentists must watch this for kicks



"No! My new socks, ruined!"



Not the most vindictive CPU in the world

surroundings. From a distance, they look gorgeous, especially as sections of the stands and the grass are bathed in a brilliant yellow glow of sunlight. The crowds don't look like cardboard cut-outs anymore and flags are being waved around in support... the atmosphere is quite breathtaking, especially with the excellent surround sound.

Move the camera in closer, however, and it's fairly obvious that the crowds are just low-res animated 2D backdrops. Thanks to filtering effects, it doesn't look pixelated as your average PlayStation game would; and it's mostly hidden due to the clever use of the stadium lighting and shadows.

With your eyes concentrated on the players and the ball, the backgrounds often appear blurred as well. The net effect is interesting - it simulates an 'out of focus' background that would happen with a real-life video camera anyway. From a strictly technical standpoint, one could argue this to be a flawed graphics system. On the other hand, would it really matter to most people who are accustomed to watching television anyway? Whether it's a matter of design or programming limitation, the

job still gets done.

Don't be expecting the real thing. One of the more surprising faults of FIFA Soccer World Championship is the sporadic frame rate problem. That is, there are numerous instances where the game runs well below the 60 frames per second standard. In some areas, the problem is on-going and inherent - such as the shadows of the waving flags literally strobing along the ground. These instances aren't really a problem. It's a problem when it causes the game to suddenly chug mid-match, which is especially annoying when you're trying to pull off some crucial manoeuvre, like timing a shot. Imagine the frustration of finally working through the defence and finding that rare perfect opening, only to hit the button too early because the game choked for that one instant. It's a killer. And it mostly happens in two-player mode. That makes it even worse.

Normally, you'd attribute such phenomenon to system limitations. After all, the CPU has to process, in some way or another, the animations, textures, positioning, and AI of so many characters running around on-field at the same time. On the PlayStation this excuse

would've held water. However, considering FIFA 2000 experienced no such problems on the PlayStation, it's difficult to conceive of any other reason for these problems other than to attribute it to sloppy programming. If there really were processing difficulties, EA Sports could have at least reduced the standard frame rate to something where the slow-down isn't noticeable.

#### TO BE PERFECTLY HONEST...

After all the tech-talk is said and done, however, the bottom line is that FIFA Soccer World Championship isn't really a massive leap of any kind over the kind of games we've been playing before. This isn't to say it doesn't do impressive things - it's just that as a matter of structure and design, it doesn't look all that different from the FIFA games of old.

Why? The game is still viewed from a distant perspective. The players still look tiny on the screen. As a result of being so small, the increased polygon count and texture detail would be lost on anyone until the camera actually zooms in for the replays and so on. Sure, there are options to zoom the camera in a



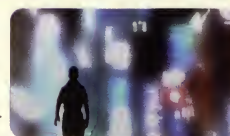
## GOOOOALLL!!!

FIFA Soccer World Championship is filled with little animation clips that gives the game more rhythm and tempo. Every time a goal is scored, one of four animation clips will kick in as the players rush in to congratulate each other, diving around on the floor, appealing to the crowd, and making general hoons of themselves. It's also nice to see EA Sports has a sense of humour about these clips - in one animation, one of the players always trips over the advertisement banners on the side of the field and lands squarely on his head. Great comedy value the first few times - awfully repetitive after a while...



## WOT? NO4-PLAYER

Amazingly, FIFA Soccer World Championship does NOT feature a four-player mode. It only allows a maximum of two. This is disappointing on several levels, especially for the fact that rowdy 4-player matches have formed the backbone of many a social evening in front of the PlayStation. It's also disappointing considering the fact that the original PlayStation multitap isn't compatible with the PS2, meaning you need the specially-designed PS2 version; which in turn has a grand total of one game at the present moment with any functional use: Tekken Tag Tournament. Yeah, like anyone's going to play 4-player Tekken Tag...



## PS2 FEATURES

- Memory Card
- 1 or 2 Players
- Dual Shock Compatible



Nothing gets past this guy



Eyes on the ball



"That's right! Every yellow jersey wins a prize!"

little further during the match, but not by much.

Therefore, if you're wondering why FIFA Soccer World Championship doesn't have the same kind of in-your-face flare of, say, Virtua Striker 2000, it's because of the choreography and direction. Something needs to be changed in the camera system. And given that camera angles are a largely determined by ideologies on how soccer is best played, it's not likely EA Sports is going to change them.

### ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

There are other things EA Sports can do to make FIFA Soccer World Championship look less 'samey'. If their showing at E3 is any indication, they should make an effort to get rid of the redundant option screens and revamp their

presentation style. Madden 2001, for instance, shows the instant replay footage inset during other non-interactive screens. The idea is to break free from the "games imitate television" mould, which is a restriction that a machine of the PS2's display capabilities should easily be able to do. It's just a question, then, of using a little imagination.

Until EA Sports makes its final corrections and changes to the Western release, the technical glitz that makes graphics junkies go "wow" is going to have a big question mark hanging over it. In the meantime, FIFA Soccer World Championship at least gets the core gameplay right, and is great fun to play.

Kevin Cheung



Still waiting...

Australian  
Station

GRAPHICS!	★★★	Good player modelling, but with strange framerate issues
SOUND!	★★★★	Excellent surround sound effects for that stadium atmosphere
GAMEPLAY!	★★★★	They got the mix right on the first go
DIFFICULTY!	★★★	Technical issues being the major hurdle
LIFESPAN!	★★★	There's enough depth to keep you coming back

83  
PERCENT



# TV.DJ

Parappa and friends get some competition on the PS2

## PS2 FACTS

- Publisher  
SCE
- Developer  
SCE
- Genre  
Puzzle/Rhythm
- Release Date  
TBA
- Expectations  
The weirdest, trippiest goddamn game you've ever seen.

## ALTERNATIVES

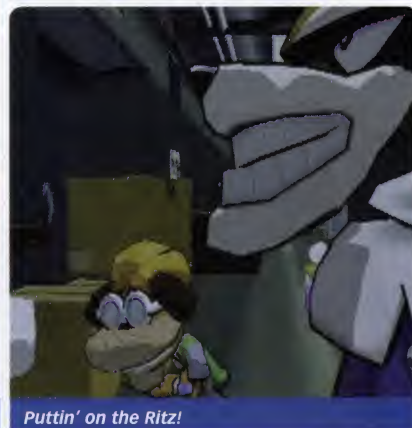
- Parappa the Rapper (SCE)
- Um Jammer Lammy (SCE)



If you're blue, and you don't know where to go to...



Why don't you go where Harlem sits!



Puttin' on the Ritz!



This game can really blow up in your face

If you're familiar with Pa Rappa the Rapper or Um Jammer Lammy, you might have a rough idea of where this game is going. TVDJ is one more title to add to Sony Computer Entertainment's expanding list of homegrown games, alongside Scandal, IQ Remix, and Fantavision. In spite of the criticism of hardcore fanboys, Sony are indeed gaining credibility as a game developer, if anything for originality.

TVDJ throws you deep into television politics as BBB Television struggles to improve its ratings. As a new camera man, you're assigned to the Cartoon Channel to help produce a number of television programs to help bring the station's image back up. Your camera man actually plays a non-speaking non-interactive role in all this drama. The real action starts when you have to film the shows for a live telecast, which is difficult in anyone's language. The better the show you produce, the higher your ratings, and of course the higher your score.

### TV: RETINA OF THE MIND'S EYE

How you actually film these shows is a little complicated. During key action scenes, a film reel will start scrolling along the bottom of the screen. It's up to you to fill every frame on the reel by choosing the best footage to shoot. However, instead of giving you a camera that you can readily control, the four buttons on your Dual Shock 2 are assigned to a specific portion of the screen. It makes sense to do it this way, actually. After all, when you're filming an action scene and televising it live, it would hardly do to have your camera panning around in slow-mo. The CPU takes care of all camera movements. All you have to worry about is picking the right footage to use.

Pressing the triangle button will fill one frame on the reel. The square fills two, the circle

fills three, and the X fills four. Part of your job is to make sure the footage all stays within their respective scenes - which are separated by markers on the reel. If you overshoot the marker, you'll have to start the scene over again. Restarting a scene is obviously not good when it's live television. As part of the penalty, the picture quality starts to drop, and everyone's voice gradually goes down in pitch to sound like ridiculous slow-mo.

Each button is also colour-coded. The triangle button produces green frames, the square button purple frames, the circle button red frames, and the X button blue frames. The object here is to produce a decent variation of scenes on the reel, which will improve your rating and score. If whole sections of the reel are the same colour, you're more than likely to bore your audience to tears.

It's also crucial to pick a scene when the cursor on the reel indicates. It's usually bouncing up and down on the screen in time with the music. If you fall too far out of time or just delay for too long, the scene will be considered ruined and you'll have to start over.

### A VISUAL TRIP, ER, JOURNEY...

Once you've come to grips with the basics of this system, there are numerous little techniques you can use to add flavour to the footage. Using the shoulder buttons and D-pad,





Duck!



Do as he says, or the bitch gets it!



I like the night life



I love to boogie



Go on, run away, run away in your...space...tank?



Re-enact that bit from Fight Club



You know the bit I mean

you can create effects like mosaic, motion blur, kaleidoscope, as well as combinations of those effects.

Once you've finished recording, the show is played back in its entirety, complete with all your goof-ups and mistakes. It's important to note - as you'll no doubt gather from filming the show - that it's not a continuous narrative like your average TV show. It's more like a bizarre rap show as bits of footage are replayed in rapid succession with all manner of MTV-inspired choreography. In effect, you were more the DJ than a camera man - hence the title of the game, TVDJ.

The screenshots really speak for themselves. TVDJ is all about style and atmosphere, which it has plenty of. The game looks like a very funky cartoon thanks to a technique called cell shading. That is, a thick black outline is placed around the outer edges of polygonal structures. So even though it looks like a cartoon, it still has

a pseudo 3D look that's only obvious when you look at the backgrounds.

#### PARAPPA THE RAPPER BEATER?

Even though there are only four TV shows, the appeal of TVDJ is its massive replay value. Getting a good scene together is, for the first few times, a case of trial and error. After that, it's a choice between finding the scenes that best mix together, or just doing that DJ thing and finding a good rhythm for the show. And don't forget, we are talking about wacky Japanese programs like Rabbit Telephone Shopping and Woody's Love Letter.

Hopefully, the market will find some way to make more games like TVDJ feel welcome. Most games these days are just boring, monotonous sequels, and truly original games are pretty hard to come by.

Kevin Cheung

## PS2 FEATURES

Memory Card

1 or 2 Players

Dual Shock Compatible

## SECOND OPINION



JAMES COTTEE

It's a rare game that can bring some freaky happiness into your day, and TVDJ is just such a delightful, frivolous romp. The replay options may seem limited, but the reason this game works is the same one that makes Parappa and Um Jammer Lammy such gems: The game is so fun to play you don't care that you're doing the same thing over and over again. I mean, just look at the pictures. They're happy, you're happy, everyone's happy! Let's just hope they have the sense to release this game below the equator.

Australian  
Station

GRAPHICS:	★★★	Colourful, imaginative, and full of life and character
SOUND:	★★★★	DVD format means loads of high quality sampled speech
GAMEPLAY:	★★	Extremely basic puzzle elements
DIFFICULTY:	★★	Sony know better than to torment children
LIFESPAN:	★★★	Easy to play, but has excellent replay value

75  
PERCENT



# HRESVELGR

Something to quell Wipeout Fusion anticipation? Not by a long shot

## PS2 FACTS

- Publisher  
TBA
- Developer  
Gust
- Genre  
Racing
- Expectations  
Wipeout meets N-Gen is the best way to put it. At 15 frames per second.

## ALTERNATIVES

- Wipeout Fusion  
(Psygnosis)



You have to stay on that flat energy ribbon thing, otherwise you go much slower and lose. Not a fun game



I guess that makes you number two around here

**P**laying on themes from Norse legend, Hresvelgr is a racing title where you pilot futuristic jet aircraft through a series of winding mid-air tracks. In each race, there are seven other pilots to compete with. Winning isn't necessarily a question of who finds the better racing lines, as you can use various weapons to even up the odds.

At first glance, Hresvelgr looks awesomely stylish. The fonts, logos, and other graphics are very eye-catching without being too loud, which is a very welcome change to the minimalism that's unfortunately become a fad in games like Wipeout 3 and Colin McRae 2. The style also extends to the ship designs, where all seven racing teams look bulky, slick, and very believable. Straight out of the pages of the Macross Compendium.



You can't judge the frame rate from this -

## WIPEOUT THIS AIN'T

Once you've selected a ship, the rest of the game goes downhill. Fast. First of all, you can't fly around freely. Even though the game is presented in three dimensions and gives you a good view of some expansive surroundings, you have to stay within a predetermined path. As a means of encouraging you to stay on path, your ship is powered by an energy stream that runs through the centre of the track. Wander too far away from it, and your ship will eventually die - costing you a restart and some valuable time. It seems a tad remiss of Gust to provide you with an extremely Starfox-brand of 3D flight, but hey, this is a racing game, right? You have to do something to keep them on track. Alternatively, the race can sometimes put you inside a giant tube, where you've got less than a quarter a



But rest assured it's slooooooow





ship's length to move on either side.

At least this much is apparent when you're in the qualifying round. Get to the race itself, and you'll realise this game has more things to worry about than track design. It's unplayable. As soon as the race starts, the motion perceptibly drops from 30 to 20, then to around 10 or 15 frames of animation per second, which is absolutely appalling even by PlayStation standards, where 30fps is standard. What it means in practical terms is that the action is impossible to follow. A mountain in the distance, for instance, won't glide smoothly off the side of your screen as you fly past it. It will strobe across the screen, disappearing for an instant and strangely reappearing a good few inches to the right over and over again until it disappears off the screen.

Now imagine this phenomenon taking hold of the entire race. You basically can't make out what's happening to your ship, you can't tell when you should start steering in a particular direction, and it's impossible to aim your weapons at the other competing ships. You cannot make a single turn without the action choking like a gibbon with emphysema as it struggles to reveal the next portion of scenery.

Equally disappointing is the complete lack of analogue controls. Sure, you can certainly use the analogue thumb stick to 'steer', but it will always be at the singular digital level. The with a low steering sensitivity and a shallow turning radius, the goal of just placing in a race is made all that more difficult by a disproportionate set of brakes.

What's worse is that there's precious little sense of inertia or momentum. Every move your ship makes is precise and mechanical. This

means navigating through the courses is inflexible and unrealistic, not to mention too punishing given the framerate problems.

#### BUT WAIT. THERE'S LESS.

There are also a number of structural and design issues with Hresvelgr. Firstly, there are no weapon pick-ups. You actually select a weapon of choice before the race, and you only have a limited amount of ammunition to use until the next race. On one hand, you could say that it adds a bit of strategy to the game. However, given how difficult to play as it is, it's not likely anyone wants to worry about ammo counts when it's hard enough to stay on track as it is. Besides, there's a lot more strategy on offer by providing a variety of weapons during the race, as evidenced in the Wipeout games.

It also seems out-of-place that the only things you can unlock in this game are the alternative modes and difficulty levels. That's right - you have to 'earn' the right to play at a higher difficulty level, or to practice a track on a time trial. This is just a case of dumb game design.

It's games like this that really make you wonder. Hresvelgr is not even up to scratch with equivalent PlayStation titles like Wipeout or N-Gen Racing, both of which are easily preferable alternatives. Did they skip the QA Testing stage or something? Whatever it is, it's going to take more than a promise of a few improvements for the Western release to make this game at all worth playing. This game needs to go back to the drawing board.

Kevin Cheung

## PS2 FEATURES

- Memory Card
- Single Player
- Dual Shock Compatible

## SECOND OPINION



JAMES COTTEY

This one's a shocker. It takes more than a bit of Scandinavian mythology and some pretty ship designs to bowl me over, and this is probably the most underwhelming game for the PS2 yet. The frame rate is terrible, the visuals are bland and you can't help but wonder if the developers are sadistic bastards or just horribly misguided. At this rate the only thing that can stop Wipeout Fusion from being the best racer on PS2 is a nuclear attack on Liverpool. You suck, Gust!

Australian  
**Station**

GRAPHICS:	★★	Cool futuristic designs, but with serious framerate problems
SOUND:	★★	Surprisingly uninspired explosions and jet-engine sounds
GAMEPLAY:	★	Jerky framerate makes it impossible to control your craft
DIFFICULTY:	★★★★	Control issues and low player motivation are never good
LIFESPAN:	★	Without a two-player mode, this gets boring very quickly

**42**  
PERCENT



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134 Colony Wars Veng	181 Forty Winks	228 Metal Gear Solid	276 Rayman	323 Ten Pin Alley	370 Wipeout 3	438 Iggi's Reckin' Ball	485 Turok: Rage Wars
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138 Cool Boarders 4	185 G Police	232 Mission Impossible	280 Reloaded	327 Test Drive 6	442 WWF War Zone	443 Madden 64	489 WCW Mayhem
139 Cool Borders 2	186 Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko	233 Monster Trucks	281 Resident Evil 3	328 Test Drive Off Road	443 WWF: Smackdown	444 Madden 99	490 WCW Revenge
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## PLAYSTATION RELEASE SCHEDULE

There's a lot happening in the next few months, so keep an eye out for some seriously groovy new games! Like Tenchu 2! NOTE: This list subject to change without notice. You pay's your money and you take's your chances.

# 15 PREPLAY CONTENTS

GAME TITLE	GENRE	DEVELOPER	RELEASE
Alundra 2	RPG	Activision	July 2000
Army Men - Operation Meltdown	Action	3DO	July 2000
Bishi Bashi Special	Party Game	Konami	July 2000
Crisis Beat	Fighting	Virgin	July 2000
Destruction Derby Raw	Driving	Studio 33	July 2000
Dragon Valour	RPG	Namco	July 2000
ECW Anarchy Rules	Wrestling	Acclaim	July 2000
Galarions	Action Adventure	Crave	July 2000
Gauntlet Legends	Arcade Action	Atari Games	July 2000
Hydro Thunder	Racing	Midway	July 2000
In Cold Blood	Adventure	Revolution	July 2000
Moho	Action	Lost Toys	July 2000
NBA In The Zone	Basketball	Konami	July 2000
Player Manager 2000	Soccer Simulation	3DO	July 2000
Soul Reaver Platinum	Adventure	Eidos	July 2000
Toshinden 4	Fighting	Virgin	July 2000
Vagrant Story	RPG	Squaresoft	July 2000
Vandal Hearts 2	RPG	Konami	July 2000
Wip3out Special Edition	Racing	Psygnosis	July 2000
All Star Tennis 2000	Tennis	Ubi Soft	August 2000
Ballistic	Puzzle	THQ	August 2000
Castrol Honda Titanium	Motorbike Racing	THQ	August 2000
Favourite Heroes Lucky Luke	Action	Infogrames	August 2000
Grind Session	Skateboarding	SCEA	August 2000
Madden NFL 2001	Grid Iron	EA	August 2000
Premier League Stars 2001	Soccer	EA UK	August 2000
Re-Volt 2	Racing	Acclaim	August 2000
Rugby 2001	Rugby	EA Australia	August 2000
Suikoden 2	RPG	Konami	August 2000
Sydney 2000	Olympic Sports	Eidos	August 2000
Terracon	Platform	Picture House	August 2000
TOCA World Touring Cars	Rally Driving	Codemasters	August 2000
Vib Ribbon	Music	SCEI	August 2000
X-Men Mutant Academy	Fighting	Activision	August 2000
Alien Resurrection	Action	Fox	Sept 2000
Animorphs: Shattered Reality	Action	Infogrames	Sept 2000
Chase The Express	Action adventure	Sugar & Rockets	Sept 2000
Flintstones Bedrock Bowling	Platform	Ubi Soft	Sept 2000
Formula One 2000	Racing	Psygnosis	Sept 2000
Frogger 2	Retro	Hasbro	Sept 2000
Galaga	Shoot-em-up	Hasbro	Sept 2000
Infestation	Action Strategy	Frontier Developments	Sept 2000
Moto Racer	Racing	Delphine	Sept 2000
Mr. Driller	Puzzle	Namco	Sept 2000
MTV Skateboarding	Skateboarding	THQ	Sept 2000
Nightmare Creatures 2	Action	Konami	Sept 2000
Rayman 2	Platform Adventure	Ubi Soft	Sept 2000
Simpsons Bowling	Bowling	Fox	Sept 2000
Spiderman	Action Adventure	Activision	Sept 2000
Star Trek Invasion	Space Shooter	Activision	Sept 2000
Team Buddies	RTS	Psygnosis Camden	Sept 2000
Tenchu 2	Adventure	Sony Music	Sept 2000
Tony Hawk Skateboarding 2	Skateboarding	Neversoft	Sept 2000
Vanishing Point	Racing	Acclaim	Sept 2000
Wacky Races	Racing	Infogrames	Sept 2000
World's Scariest Police	Action	Fox	Sept 2000
Austin Powers	Action	Take Two	October 2000
Battleship 2	Strategy	Hasbro	October 2000
Breakout	Retro	Hasbro	October 2000
F1 Racing Championship	Racing	Ubi Soft	October 2000
Jerry Lopez Surf Riders	Arcade Surfing	Ubi Soft	October 2000
Pool Palace Academy	Pool	Ubi Soft	October 2000
Pure Ride	Snowboarding	THQ	October 2000
Rayman Kids	Kids	Ubi Soft	October 2000
Batman	Adventure	Ubi Soft	Nov 2000
Danger Girl	Adventure	THQ	Nov 2000
Inspector Gadget	Platform Adventure	Ubi Soft	Nov 2000



**32 X-MEN MUTANT ACADEMY**  
You've seen the movie, now play the game! Everyone's favourite comic book characters now come alive with totally over the top fighting action!

**36 TONY HAWK SKATEBOARDING 2**  
The original and best returns! Set to blow away all the pretenders to the skateboarding throne with more moves, options, players and style than ever!

**38 CHASE THE EXPRESS**  
It's like a cross between Resident Evil and Syphon Filter, on a train. Nasty terrorists have taken hostages, and it's your job to blow the heathen scum away.

**39 SYDNEY 2000**  
The Olympics are just around the corner, and this officially licensed gaming product will help you get that little bit closer to the action.

**40 INFESTATION**  
Aliens are overrunning the planet! This is the sequel to Virus, and you pilot a vehicle that can drive, float and fly in your mission to stop them.

**41 TOCA WORLD TOURING CARS**  
Bathurst! Finally, every red-blooded Australian's dream to race at Mount Panorama has come true! The third TOCA game looks to be the best yet.

**42 DUKE NUKEM: LAND OF THE BABES**  
Sequel to Duke Nukem: Time To Kill. Duke gets sucked through a time warp to the year 2525 when all male life on Earth has been exterminated...

**43 MR DRILLER**  
Mega happy fun to the power of ten billion! Drill your way through countless colourful Tetris blocks in a simplistic yet manic adventure!

**43 COMMANDER KEEN**  
Before they made Doom and Quake, the boys at id software made this seminal platform game. After a decade, it's finally coming to PlayStation.

**44 VIP**  
Pamela Anderson-Lee stars in her own game based on her very own TV show. Can she give Lara Croft a run for her money?

**44 MOTO RACER WORLD GP**  
A motorcycle racing game with realistic physics and decent graphics. It's about time. But how will this new racer stack up as a whole?



# X-Men Mutant Academy

Learn to fight - the Mutant way...

## FACT FILE

■ Publisher  
Activision

■ Developer  
Activision

■ Genre  
Fighting

■ Release Date  
August/September

■ Players  
One or Two

■ Number of cds  
One

■ Game Features  
Memory Card,  
Dual Shock

## PROGRESS REPORT

### Positive Points

- ◆ Interesting fighting action
- ◆ Some great backgrounds and animations

### Negative Points

- ◆ Regeneration means fights can go for too long
- ◆ More options and characters needed to increase lifespan







If you haven't heard of the X-Men in the last 10 years, you must have had your head in a hole. Numerous comic book titles, more crossovers than anyone would care to mention, a cartoon series, toys, books, and appearances at the arcades and on consoles in supporting roles, not to mention finally a live-action movie, make them one of the most recognisable groups of superheroes in the world. However, when it comes to PlayStation, they've usually been playing second fiddle to Ryu and his friends in titles like *X-Men versus Street Fighter*, and its superior descendant, *Marvel Vs Capcom*. Now they have their own fighting game. The question is: did they deserve it?

#### TRADITIONAL FIGHTING

*X-Men Mutant Academy* is a 2D fighter in a fairly traditional sense of the phrase. It involves one or two players, picking some of the most famous heroes and villains from the X-Men franchise, and beating the stuffing out of each other or going solo against the merciless PlayStation. The game options that were on the version we had were all fairly standard: Arcade, Versus, Option, Training, and Movie (where after unlocking them you can watch



Beast shows off his fisting technique



This picture is censored for your own good



Gambit sure knows how to handle a pole



Magneto has a chat with his interior decorator

FMV sequences, clips and pictures from the movies, and famous scenes from the comics). Unfortunately, since the training mode wasn't available on the version we tested, it is impossible to comment on it. This is unfortunate, as the X-Men are famous for the complicated and deadly scenarios Professor Xavier cooks up for them in their training rooms, and it would have been interesting to see how this was ported onto this PlayStation title.

There are a fairly small assortment of characters to choose from. The heroes everybody knows and loves are there: Cyclops, Wolverine, Storm, Gambit, Phoenix (one of the unusual incarnations of Jean Grey), Beast; as are some of the notable villains from the series, Sabretooth, Magneto, Toad and Mystique. Many of these cannot be selected for arcade mode at first and must be unlocked; all are available for versus mode, luckily. A larger selection including such favourites as Rogue, Nightcrawler and Havoc would have been nice.

#### SMOOTH ANIMATOR

Fighting takes place on some nice, well-rendered and occasionally animated backgrounds, including a moon base, a ruined skyscraper roof and a flying barge. Watching gigantic sentinels zoom back and forth over the devastated remains of a city in the background is a nice touch, and reminds the players of the comic book universe this is all taking place in. The characters can only move in 2D, but are quite well detailed and animated. Some of the moves look and feel a bit clumsy, especially the low kicks, but that is hardly unusual for a 2D fighting game.

The attack buttons follow the traditional Street Fighter system; weak, medium and strong for punch and kick. By default weak and medium attacks are set to the four standard buttons with strong punch and kick set to R1 and R2. Each character also has Throw and Counter, set to L1

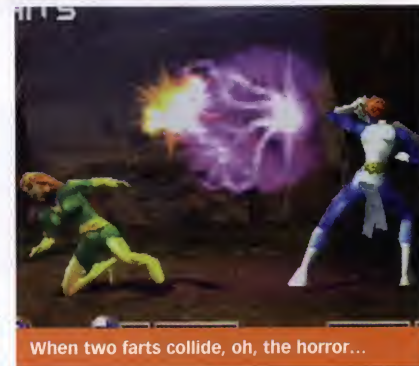
and L2 respectively. The throw animations for many of the characters are absolutely fantastic, possibly the best yet seen on a PlayStation fighter, especially for the more unusual characters like Phoenix and Magneto. The counter button can work in different ways against different attacks. When performed against some normal attacks, it will push or throw the attacker away, sometimes putting them off-balance. Against certain special attacks, it will deflect the attack and follow up with an immediate counter-attack, similar to the Reversal in the Tekken series of fighting games. It didn't seem too unbalancing however, as against some moves it did nothing and would result only in getting hit.

#### UNUSUAL STYLE

This game follows the Street Fighter model in other ways as well; block is performed by pushing back, crouch block is done by pushing down. There are two attack heights, high and low. It would have been nice to see the three attack heights (high, mid, low) and the block/crouch block/duck system of defense in Tekken and Dead or Alive. Where this game does differ from its apparent Street Fighter parents is in the style of moves and gameplay involved. Every character has access to some standard punches and kicks, and a few special moves (laser blasts, magnetic attacks, and the like), which are generally performed through quarter-circles back or forward and medium or strong punch/kick. However, many of these special moves aren't as powerful as they are in the recent incarnations of Street Fighter, and shouldn't be used too often. In fact, simple advance or jump attacking strings are often effective, with each character easily accessing its "magic series" and throwing together 4 or 5 hit combos for decent damage.

However, there is also a "power-up bar" which is activated not by performing special





moves but by doing a certain move rapidly, which changes from fight to fight. Once the power-up bar is activated, much more deadly special attacks can be unleashed. This creates a fairly unusual style of fighting which switches between fairly cautious conventional attacks occasionally separated by insanely damaging screen-shaking moves. Obviously, this style is far removed from the "stand-up" fighting of games like *Virtua Fighter*, *Tekken* and *Dead or Alive*, but it feels quite different from a *Street Fighter* or *King of Fighters* clone.

Juggling (also known as air combos) is hardly in this game at all; few juggles can be performed, and they are quite small and tame, unlike the insane 30-hit air combos of *Marvel Vs Capcom* or the dreaded tag juggles of *Tekken Tag Tournament*. This will appeal to some, who resent being tossed up in the air and pounded like a pinyada, although it does limit the amount of flashy combos you can learn and practice.

One flaw in the fighting engine however is in the amazing amount of punishment the X-Men can soak up. Each character has a generous lifebar, and with generally weak attacks and few juggles or combos to put together, you'll have a hard time knocking that life bar down to zero. Not only that, but each character has a "regeneration" rating, which dictates how fast their health gradually recovers automatically! In some cases this is a negligible amount, but in the case of Wolverine and Sabretooth (admittedly realistically), they can prove almost impossible to kill. Be prepared for some long fights, and many bouts to be decided by life left when time is over. This may be improved and tweaked before final release.

#### CAPTURING THE FEEL

One subtle area this game succeeds well in is capturing that special over-the-top feel of comic books, the larger-than-life heroes who bust through walls and tear apart cities in their epic duels with hyper-powered rivals. For loading screens between fights, the game shows great artwork of the opposing character coming up, very much in the style of the art used in the assortment of X-Men comic titles. And between game modes, the loading screens are actual covers from X-Men comics! This is a great touch that helps immerse the player in the X-Men universe. Many of the fighting locations are appropriate to the characters fighting there (every character has a "home" level that you fight them on in Arcade mode), or related to a story or scenario in which the X-Men are involved. The sounds and music, while nothing to write home about, do a decent job of conveying the right atmosphere in the game.

As far as unlocking goes, this game features a gigantic raft of goodies lined up for the diligent player. From secret costumes for the characters, to intro and outro FMVs, special artwork and clips from the movie, players can be expecting to reaping rewards from finishing the game for some time. This obviously adds lifespan to the single-player mode of this game, always a concern for fighting games with little or no story (like this one). Unfortunately we were unable to access any of these features in the build we were given, but the list provided was frighteningly large.

One aspect that needed working was options; it was easy to change setups for audio volume or controllers, but gameplay options were severely limited. You can choose difficulty

(3 settings) and toggle demo mode, and that's it. It would have been nice to see more options for the single player, such as adjusting round time and number of rounds required to win and move on. Fortunately, the combatants in a Versus game can adjust many of these options, including life bars (from 50% to 150%). This is really handy, as it can turn a game from a drawn-out stalemate into fast and furious mayhem, with throws doing nearly half a player's lifebar. If these options were available for single player, it would make finishing the game and unlocking many of the secret features much easier and more enjoyable.

This game looks like it will quite a lot to offer when it hits the shelves; for the fighting enthusiast, it offers a fairly complex and unusual fighting engine that will require a rethink of the dreary tactics used and over-used in *Street Fighter* and *King of Fighters* games. It also sports some great scenery and animations to keep the action exciting. For the X-Men enthusiast, it offers being able to settle such eternal questions as "who'd win between Cyclops and Wolverine", without the interference of Ken and his Capcom buddies. Although it could do with a few more characters and gameplay features and options, this game manages to pull off the difficult task of breathing life into a stale genre with the right mix of style, gameplay and graphics.

Leon Tranter

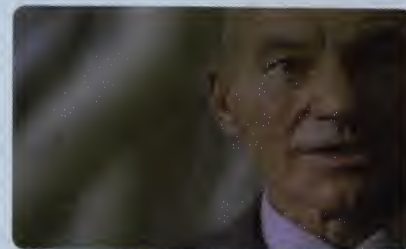




## X-men - the game - the movie



Mutant Academy isn't the only assault the X-men are making on popular culture; they're starring in their own movie, too. After being discussed and debated for many years, X-men the Movie has finally hit the big screen. The movie unsurprisingly focuses on the megalomaniac Magneto, and the key characters are the most famous members of the team, namely Wolverine, Storm, Rogue, Jean Grey and Cyclops. In a big surprise, a little-known Australian actor named Hugh Jackman, noted for his roles in theatre and musicals, landed the hotly-contested role of Wolverine! Another casting decision sure to please many fans of X-men and other sci-fi franchises is the role of the teacher of the X-men, Professor Xavier. He is to be played by none other than Patrick Stewart, also known as Captain Jean-Luc Picard from Star Trek The Next generation!



## Know your X-men



**Wolverine** - probably the most famous of all the X-men. He is a tough and deadly fighter who has extendable claws, a sturdy adamantium skeleton and regeneration powers. He is almost impossible to kill.

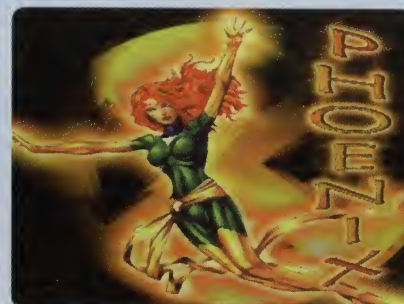
**Cyclops** - the charismatic long-time leader of the X-men. His eyes can produce incredibly powerful optic blasts, capable of wiping out nearly any opposition. He cannot control his power though, and must wear special goggles to prevent him from killing friends and bystanders.

**Phoenix** - Formerly Jean Grey, Phoenix is the personification of unimaginable cosmic force given humanoid form to fight on the side of justice.

**Storm** - a flying woman from Africa, she can control the powers of the weather. It may not sound like much, but this includes summoning tornadoes, thunderstorms and lightning blasts!

**Gambit** - a stylish Cajun in a raincoat, Gambit has incredible dexterity and can imbue anything he throws (namely, playing cards) with more kinetic energy than a bullet.

**Beast** - a strange creature with the physical form of a giant ape and the mind of a nuclear physicist.





# Tony Hawk's Skateboarding 2

The king is back. Accept no substitutes!

## FACT FILE

■ Publisher  
Activision

■ Developer  
Neversoft

■ Genre  
Skateboarding

■ Release Date  
September

■ Players  
One or two

## PROGRESS REPORT

Positive Points  
◆ - It's Tony Hawk 2! Need I go on?

Negative Points  
◆ It's not out yet



"Not to put too fine a point on it, say I'm the only bee in your bonnet..."



It would almost be acceptable to simply print "Tony Hawk's Skateboarding 2" in tiny, tiny print at the top left hand corner of this page with a release date and then run thousands of screenshots, and that would be the extent of this preview. You guys would love it, but seeing as I get paid by the word and I've got five kids to feed, I better put some text in here as well.

At first look, the best thing about Tony Hawk Skateboarding 2 is that while it is an obvious improvement on the original, thankfully the developers at Neversoft haven't done too much with the actual gameplay mechanics. You can still rip off a string of combos, jumping from half-pipes to rails with ease.

Every trick that was in the original Tony Hawk is back, which is great for those of you who have pet (read: cheap) combos that you know can rack you up some big points. I think I

remember someone named Hillous who was the king of cheap combos...

Of course, a sequel isn't a sequel without a whole bunch of new tricks being added. Tony Hawk 2 has a LOT of new tricks. Some of these tricks include nose / tailslides, nose / bluntslides, varial flip, expanded inverts, lip tricks, and several new grabs. Also, you can now do manuals, which can be very handy when you're chaining together a massive combo. All you have to do is press up then down, and you will lean forwards (or backwards), balancing on either the two front or two back wheels. Manuals can be used to help string together big combos, so if you can't reach a rail from a jump, just hit the ground, execute a manual and roll towards the rail. And don't worry, these new tricks are just as easy to execute as they were in the original Tony Hawk.





However, Neversoft have failed to add tic-tacs to Tony Hawk 2, which should disappoint most of the hardcore skaters out there.

Along with new tricks, another cool feature is the new crash animations. Blood is back, and the default crash animation will see your boarder try and regain his balance, land on the board and shoot it 100m in the air. If the game was more realistic it would roll onto a freeway and get snapped in two, but seeing as this is a PlayStation game it just re-appears under your feet a second later.

Also, if you bail out on a rail slide, prepare for one of the most painful animations you'll ever see in a PlayStation game - let's just call it the Nutcracker Suite.

Every pro rider from the original Tony Hawk is back as well, and they've also recruited a few fresh faces (I love aliteration). The new guys are Steve Caballero, Eric Koston and Rodney Mullen. And there's one more big name that has been added as well...yours.

That's right, there's now a Create a Skater mode in Tony Hawk 2! In this mode you can assign points to different skills like speed, air, balance - all the ratings that the pros are judged on in the game already. Custom trick sets are also available, and you can also cosmetically change your new skater with his or her own look, and of course their own fresh clothes.

Once you've created your own ultimate skater, you can then plug them in the Career Mode as well, where they function just like any of the other pros in the game. As you progress their skills will improve, and you'll unlock their own boards.

The courses in Tony Hawk 2 are a lot more "world based". While the game is still US-based (there are courses in Ventura, New York, Southern California and Philadelphia), there are also tracks in France, Mexico and Tadzhikstan (this is a real place, we didn't make this up).



More of the courses will be based on real-life skate parks this time as well, and there will also be more secret areas to explore. If you follow the rule of "if you can see it, you can skate there", you'll be on the way to unlocking quite a bit of stuff.

Along with the Create a Player mode, the other major addition is the Skate Park Editor. That's right, make your own (wet) dream skating environment. Basically, if you see an object, ramp or bowl in any pre-set course in the game, you can use it in your own created skate park. The editor is so easy to use it's not funny, just select what object / ramp / bowl you want to use, and place it in the park. Done.

There's also some new multiplayer modes. The original modes are still there (Trick Attack, Graffiti and Horse), plus there is now a Tag Mode. There's also a multi-player contest that allows you and up to seven of your friends to compete against each other in skating heats.

The first Tony Hawk spawned countless inferior rip offs, and now it's time for the original to come back and squash the competition. Don't even think about getting a new skateboarding game until Tony Hawk's Skateboarding 2 is released later this year.

Wesley Willis



# Chase the Express

...with his Friends Thomas, Clara, and Annabel

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Sony
- Developer  
Sugar and Rockets
- Genre  
3rd person  
Adventure/Action
- Release Date  
July
- Players  
One

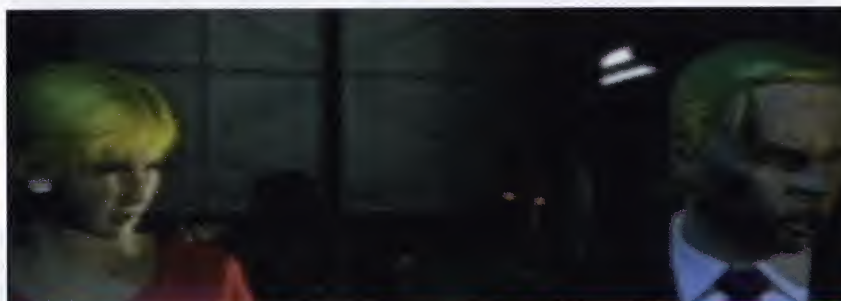
## PROGRESS REPORT

### Positive Points

- ◆ The graphics are as good as anything else in the field.
- ◆ Neat little features show care and attention to detail in the game's overall design

### Negative Points

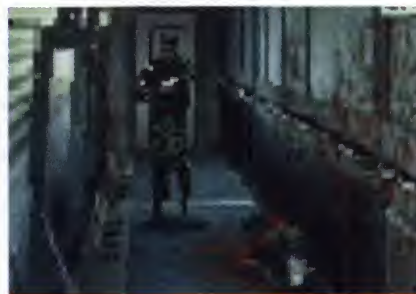
- ◆ Gameplay is stale.
- ◆ The storyline is clichéd (in the extreme) and the dialogue follows suit.



Jawas are recognised as giving the harshest anal probes

**T**his game, in the vein of Tomb Raider or Resident Evil, or even the lesser-known Mission Impossible, is about your desperate mission to rescue the French ambassador from evil Eurotrash terrorists. Armed with submachineguns, ponytails, and hideous indeterminate North European Accents, they've taken him and his family hostage while they were on their hols. But never fear! What's a terrorist armed with a submachinegun against an American Commando armed with a handgun? **THAT'S RIGHT, HE'S DEAD!**

But the fun doesn't stop there! Because, distinguishing this action game from competitors is the fact that it's set aboard a moving train! (Hence the title. Although, literally speaking, you're not chasing the express itself, but the people on it. Mabe someone should make a train chasing game, though? Nah...) Now, before anyone complains that there's a Steven Segal movie with exactly the same plot as this, let me point out that there are a wide variety of brain-stretching puzzles in this game. The only



Real footage of riding Sydney's trains



Join our magic circle

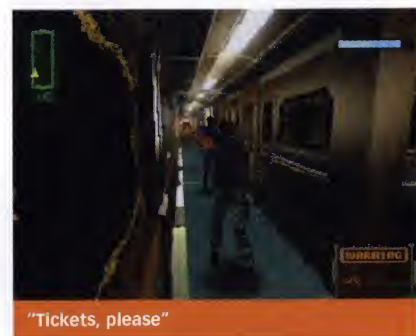
brain-stretching we've ever seen Steven do is of other people's, and that kind doesn't count.

### UNSTRETCH MY BRAIN

Don't worry though, the puzzles are there to make you think a little, not to have you tearing your hair in frustration. They might give you pause, but you're not likely to need hints from this magazine to get through them. (Of course, we're always here if you do need us...) The main focus of the game is the action, which is fast-paced, gripping, and graphically very satisfying. After you despatch the guys on top of the train, for example, the screen cuts to an alternate angle so you can have the satisfaction of watching them fall to their doom from the perfect seat...

### WHAT'S NEW?

The developers have obviously gone to a lot of trouble to include extra features which, even if they don't revolutionise your gaming experience, make it that much more enjoyable



"Tickets, please"



Showing of the grey power of the grey box

to play the game. The map function, for instance, makes available instantly all the information you know about the layout of the train, as well as making clear where the gaps in your knowledge are. When trouble is approaching, the music changes, and a heart-rate (health) display comes up to let you know that trouble's a-brewing. But, because you don't know exactly when or where this trouble is coming from, there's a great feeling of suspense. Combat is intuitive, and shouldn't pose much difficulty to anyone familiar with their trusty control pad. Still, you'll be glad of that simplicity as the game progresses and your opponents become tougher and more numerous. Everything is neatly integrated into a functional but atmospheric interface. All in all, Chase the Express is a very professional-looking effort from little-known developer Sugar & Rockets, and we're looking forward to getting our hands on the final version.

Gus Hungerford





# SYDNEY 2000

"By ~~Yianna Souleles~~" By Sophie Gosper

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Ozisoft
- Developer  
Eidos
- Genre  
Olympic Sim
- Release Date  
August
- Players  
One to eight

## PROGRESS REPORT

### Positive Points

- ◆ It's got the word "Sydney" and the number "2000" in the title
- ◆ Bruce McAvaney

### Negative Points

- ◆ Bleeding finger syndrome
- ◆ Bruce McAvaney



The legs up position increases fertility



Stone Cold shows off the latest intro to all the WWF fans



The female athletes have given up hiding suspicious groin bulges



You'd want to be tough to wear a leotard

**H**ello everyone! This new Sydney 2000 video game looks ace! Guess what? I'm the first person in Australia to play it as well! (some other girl was meant to play it first but my daddy got me the first copy, cool hey!). Well I better start talking about this awesome game based on the Sydney 2000 Olympics then, shouldn't I?

There are heaps of different sports to play in Sydney 2000, almost as many as the actual Olympics (close enough anyway, there's only about 50 or so that they left out). The sports are: 100m Sprint, 110m Hurdles, Hammer Throw, Javelin, Triple Jump, High Jump, 100m Freestyle Swimming, Sprint Cycling, Skeet Shooting, Super Heavyweight, Weight Lifting, 10m Platform Diving and Kayak K1 Slalom. Phew, I'm out of breath listing all those sports! It's almost as tiring as running in the Torch Relay!

As well as having all those really cool Olympic sports, Sydney 2000 also looks pretty as well! Eidos, the smarties who made this game, have invented a feature called "motion closure"

or "motion capture", something like that anyway, where they put fluorescent electrical tape on the athlete's bodies and watch them in a dark room, then draw on a computer screen how they look. This makes everything look just like a movie on your PlayStation!

Also, Eidos helped make the Olympic facilities, and they made sure that the facilities that were made for the Olympics were modeled exactly like the way their computer game looks. How smart is that? Eidos must be the best developers in the world.

Unlike most games, where you only get one game on the disk, Eidos have also managed to squeeze three whole games into Sydney 2000 - these are Olympic, Arcade and Coaching. It hurts my brain just to think how they do this. You'd think it comes on one disk, so you just get one game, wouldn't you?

The Arcade game is just like a game that you'd find in an arcade - hence the name, "Arcade Mode". In this mode you just start off in the finals and try and win that event. This is just

for boring people who don't want to work their way to the top. I won't be doing that, that's what my daddy taught me.

For the hard workers out there, who don't use their friends or parents to get them ahead in the world, there is Olympic Mode. Here you have to start at the bottom of the rung and train your athletes and work your way up to the gold. This is the best mode - no one likes a queue jumper.

I almost forgot, Sydney 2000 will also have Bruce McAvaney as a commentator, but don't let that stop you from buying the game. Only kidding, Bruce and my dad are great mates. I can't wait for Sydney 2000 to be released so everyone else in the world can play this awesome game. There are no real athlete names in there, but that doesn't matter - the game is still heaps of fun!

### Disclaimer

All persons referred to in this piece are entirely fictional, and any similarities to any person or persons living or dead is entirely coincidental.



# Infestation

Just when you shook off a virus, now you've got an infestation to worry about

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Ubi Soft
- Developer  
Frontier  
Developments
- Genre  
Shoot-em-up
- Release Date  
September
- Players  
One

## PROGRESS REPORT

### Positive Points

- ◆ Groovy alien blasting experience
- ◆ From the makers of Elite

### Negative Points

- ◆ First game had camera control issues
- ◆ First game was also bloody hard



This new sequel to V 2000 is looking to be a real winner



Blast the tents!

As per usual, aliens are making human expansion into space an enterprise fraught with hassle. For the audacity of daring to move beyond our home solar system, hoards of extra-terrestrial nasties have destroyed all our colonies, and even Earth itself tinkers on the edge of oblivion. What's that you say? Sounds like an opportunity for a lone pilot in some kind of experimental vehicle to dash about righting wrongs against incredible odds? Well, you're right!

This is the sequel to V 2000, so those who played the first will have a rough idea what to expect. From a view above and behind your sleek futuristic craft you scoot over the surface of the planet, blasting enemies, gathering weapons and resources and freeing the innocent from their inhuman captors.

### TRIPLE CHANGER?

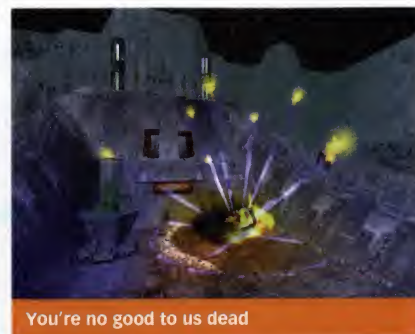
In V 2000 you navigated the terrain in a sort of

jet-ski vehicle, that when charged up with enough fuel could become airborne for more accessible alien blasting. The same is true for Infestation, only now you have a wheeled land mode as well. There was a radar map to keep an eye on, and as far as completing your objectives went a certain amount of tactical finesse was required, but it was very much an arcade experience. You had to be on your toes at all times, and your fragile craft could easily be destroyed.

We've yet to play Infestation, but this is probably still the case. It's good to see that the idea of arcade action motivated by the possibility of sudden death is still alive and well. We've found in our experience that a difficult game is ultimately a more rewarding one. One problem V 2000 presented though was camera control issues, we've got our fingers crossed that in this new version it will actually be possible to see your ship.



Giant, bendy pencils. Uh-oh



You're no good to us dead



Not the friendliest place to look at

### THE FINAL FRONTIER

Infestation is being developed by Frontier Developments, a company owned and run by David Braben. Mr Braben was one of the two men who created the legendary space combat game Elite way back in '84, and is regarded as something of a prominent figure in the games industry, if not a visionary.

This handle is probably unwarranted, as while the two sequels he produced to Elite on his own were fun to play, they were arguably flawed at a fundamental level. Braben has since announced that he's working on Elite IV, a title that could find its way to the PlayStation2. Infestation should be a good barometer for testing the mettle of his current pool of programmers. We'll bring you the full review next month, and if Infestation rocks, then we'll have a new PS2 title to start drooling over.

James Cottee



Ah, vulcanism. This makes much more sense



# TOCA World Touring Cars

Who wants to be king of the mountain?

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Ozisoft
- Developer  
Codemasters
- Genre  
Driving Sim
- Release Date  
August 2000
- Players  
1-4

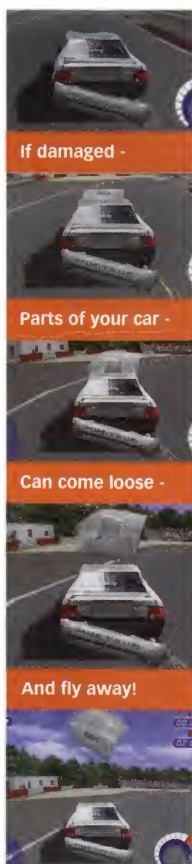
## PROGRESS REPORT

### Positive Points

- ◆ Bathurst, excellent damage model, Bathurst.

### Negative Points

- ◆ It's not finished yet!

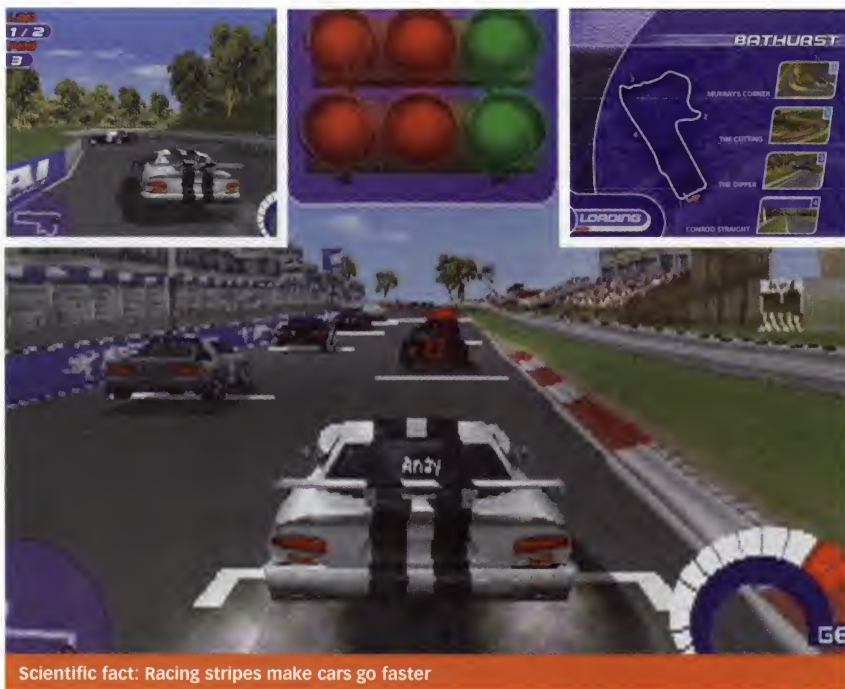


If damaged -

Parts of your car -

Can come loose -

And fly away!



Scientific fact: Racing stripes make cars go faster

The third TOCA game is coming our way with a much more international feel. Before we get anywhere with this preview, we need to say one word to get your attention - BATHURST. Right, that should have got at least half of you sitting up a little straighter. Yes, that's right World Touring Cars from our driving-sim heroes, Codemasters, has Mount Panorama as one of its many circuits.

But before we get into the detail of how faithful it is to the real thing, let's look at WTC a bit more broadly first. This latest racing game was originally going to be called TOCA 3 but was changed to the more generic TOCA World Touring Cars to reflect its much more international flavour. There are a number of championships set all around the world, including Australasia and the US, so it was obvious that the game needed a name change.

Hot on the heels of their new king rally game, Codies look set to take the crown in the road circuits too. World Touring Cars shows

other car games what a damage model is supposed to be and couples it with meticulous attention to detail in car physics along with track design.

### AROUND THE WORLD IN 23 TRACKS

The final code will boast 23 tracks from all around the globe including Adelaide, Surfers Paradise and of course Bathurst from our own backyard. The US, Japan, England and various Mediterranean countries have been similarly catered for and that point alone should prove to be a great attractant to the masses.

There are 40 souped up vehicles to choose from and for those hardcore fans, intermingled with the Audis and BMWs are Holdens and Fords. All the cars have accurate designs down to the wings and paint jobs.

And you'll get some unusual close-ups of parts of the car to prove this. Remember the damage model we mentioned earlier? As you do damage to your car, bits and pieces start working loose and will eventually fall off. This includes both bumper bars, the rear wing and the front bonnet. The bonnet can even fly off back into your face if the latch breaks and the wind gets underneath.

Not only do the bits fall off, but they stay on the track for the duration of the race - your bits and the odd bumper bar or two from other cars who've been damaged.

### THE AI IS ALMOST HUMAN

The AI has been improved since TOCA 2 and the drivers are even more aggressive if possible. What makes a game like this so good is having tough computer drivers who will ride the very



From here you can see your bonnet detach!



The tracks are captured in minute detail

edge of the acceptable to win. Not only that, but sometimes they'll fail and lose control. This can result in them crashing into you or - if you're especially lucky - into another driver, putting them out of the race and letting you jump a couple of positions.

Okay, okay, we can hear you crying out for the answer to the ultimate question - how does Bathurst feel? The answer is one that will just make you more frustrated, we're afraid. The Mount Panorama circuit has been faithfully modelled and is a dream to drive on. All of the corners are instantly recognisable and the sections of track that prove to be most difficult to navigate are the ones you often see the accidents on during Channel 7's coverage.

We can't wait to see the final product. This game plays like a finished game except that certain tracks weren't available and a couple of niggly things like overdone reflections. If those circuits and vehicles prove to be made up of the same detail, then driving fans are going to drool over this one for a long time to come.

Andrew Parsons



UNACCEPTABLE DAMAGE

We still can't get over how detailed it all is



# Duke Nukem: Land of the Babes

Those alien swines are gonna pay...

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Ozisoft
- Developer  
GTI
- Genre  
3rd person Action
- Release Date  
TBA
- Players  
One

## PROGRESS REPORT

### Positive Points

- ◆ It's the Duke!
- ◆ Classic 3rd person action gameplay

### Negative Points

- ◆ Graphics glitches, kind of ugly
- ◆ Are they taking the "bad-ass" thing too far?



A gold Desert Eagle. How...nice

**D**uke Nukem is a burly action hero who made his debut on the PC, first on low-budget platform games and later in the popular first-person shooter, Duke Nukem 3D. He bears many similarities to other characters like Ash from Evil Dead, or many of Arnie's identical roles, and is famous for his cheesy lines and his love of strip joints.

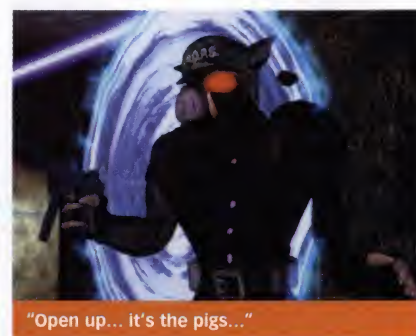
The Duke is now starring in a 3rd person action game currently in development for the Playstation, entitled Duke Nukem: Land of the Babes, the sequel to Duke Nukem: Time To Kill. The storyline, as explained by a well-produced FMV intro, involves Duke being dragged into the future by "babes", the survivors of an alien attack which wiped out the male population of the planet. Duke must rescue the babes and kill all the aliens, or something.

### DAMN - I'M LOOKING GOOD

This game looks like it will offer a Tomb Raider-style of gameplay, with more emphasis on action and less on platforming or puzzle solving. Duke has a variety of guns at his

disposal, including a Desert Eagle pistol and a Combat Shotgun, and must battle his way through levels infested with alien ratmen and hostile pig people. The usual fare is there; some jumping puzzles, some items that have to be used in the right place, lots of running around corners and strafing bad guys.

This most recent build of the game was in an incompleted state, and has some areas that need some work. While it offers the well-known and loved Duke Nukem and many babes under threat by hostile aliens, the technical aspects seem lacking. There were some graphic and colour glitches present, especially on areas with lots of water. None of the textures seemed well rendered, and the colour schemes used became ugly and repetitive quite quickly. Duke Nukem's controls for running, jumping and strafing didn't respond very well, and some areas even early on were surprisingly difficult to manage. This will hopefully all be cleaned up for the final release.



"Open up... it's the pigs..."



Duke just doesn't know when to stop

### SHAKE IT, BABY

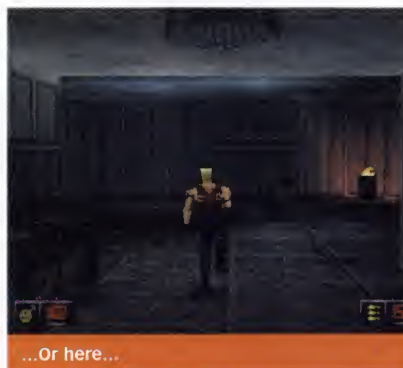
The developers seemed to have understood the Duke style and ethos well. This is captured in the FMV scenes, which were working in the build we received. They may have possibly gone a little overboard however, and not remembered that Duke himself is meant to be a send-up rather than a stereotype of action movie cliches. Many of Duke's more memorable lines from his earlier games look like they will be included in this title, for those fans of his glory days on the PC.

This game may promise some exciting action for 3rd person shooter fans, though the emphasis is clearly on the shooting rather than anything else. There are still technical issues to be resolved, and it remains to be seen whether these can be overcome. This genre is crowded with some high-quality titles like Syphon Filter and Metal Gear Solid, so breaking the market may be a difficult task, even for the Duke.

Leon Tranter



Nothing to kill in here...



...Or here...



The game mustn't be finished yet



# Mr Driller

He's gonna drill you, sucka!

## FACT FILE

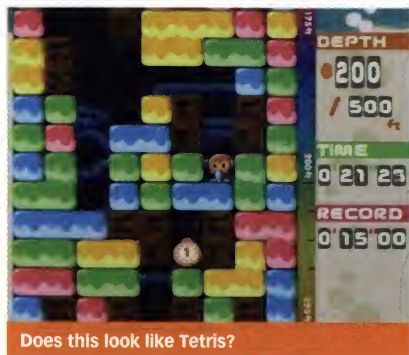
■ Publisher  
Sony

■ Developer  
Namco

■ Genre  
Arcade Action

■ Release Date  
September

■ Players  
One



Does this look like Tetris?

A clatter of sounds from clashing yet jubilant genres, swirling dances of pastel shapes, and a main character designed for cuteness above all else; can this be anything but a Japanese game? Like a council worker from the world of Hello Kitty, Mr Driller seems designed to disturb entire neighborhoods with his energetic approach to public works. While seemingly just another take on the retro genre, this upcoming title from Namco is really something else.

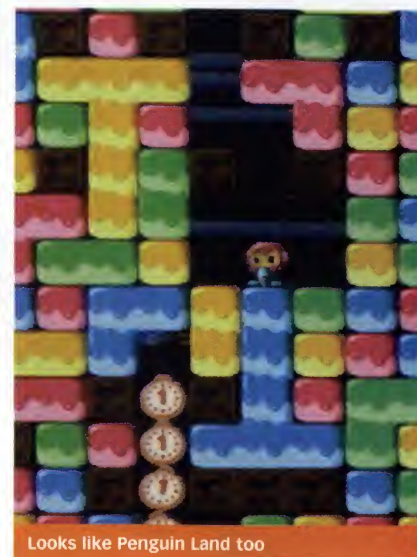
Like a cross between Boulder Dash and Tetris, Mr Driller sees your enthusiastic,



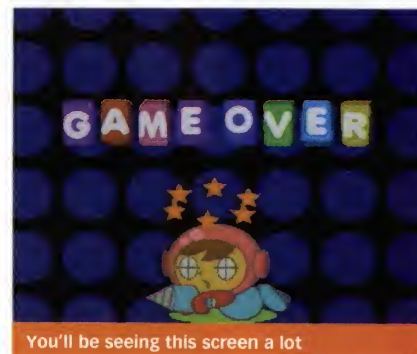
jumpsuited hero plunge ever downward through a shaft of rubbery rectangular shapes. To descend you must destroy the shapes beneath you, but doing so can easily bring the house down around your ears. This is where the puzzle element comes in, for a descending block can be arrested by sliding past a like-colored block, where it will fuse with it. The player must then balance his competing urges to soundly explore the depths of the Earth and to belt downwards like a madman.

There are various game options to tweak this basic premise, arcade and time attack and so forth, but the nature of the game remains the same. There are dozens of different levels, and a genuine challenge awaiting those who underestimate the mettle of Mr Driller based solely on his benign exterior. The real question hovering over this game is whether a market jaded by the retro collections of the past will be prejudiced against it, as there's no real reason why it shouldn't succeed. Full review next month.

James Cottee



Looks like Penguin Land too



You'll be seeing this screen a lot

# COMMANDER KEEN

Meet the saviour of the galaxy. IQ: 384. Age: 8

## FACT FILE

■ Publisher  
Jack of All Games

■ Developer  
ID

■ Genre  
Platformer

■ Release Date  
TBA

■ Players  
one



Something of a classic among PC gamers, Commander Keen made a big splash when he debuted in 1990. With the games simple yet highly playable design, widely varied opponents and an interesting physics engine, it captured the imagination of a generation. How could a game programmed in only 2 and a half months make such an impact on the world? Because it was written by the same guys



Facing the turd of death

who went on to make Doom and Quake, the legendary forefathers at Id Software.

In its original form it was a side-scrolling platform game. You played the self-styled Commander Keen, an eight year old boy genius who built a rocket ship out of old soup cans and bits and pieces he found around the house. As you explored the games vast and varied levels you could either jump around normally or deploy your pogo-stick to make higher, harder to control jumps. It was a simple formula that



This is a subliminal message

worked very well.

Now that Commander Keen has popped up on our PlayStation release schedules, we're more than a little excited about this new blast from the past. We don't have any visuals from the new game so here are some images from Keen's past exploits. As soon as any details on this one emerge, we'll let you know, as this is a retro title that hits close to home.

James Cottee



# Moto Racing World Tour

Take your Moto every where!

## FACT FILE

■ Publisher  
Sony

■ Developer  
Delphine

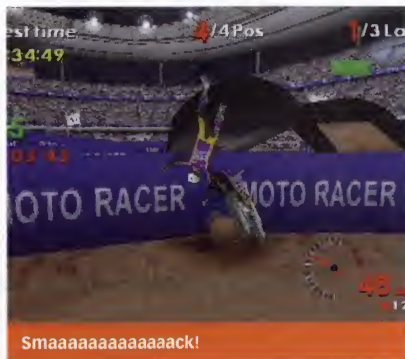
■ Genre  
Motobike Racing

■ Release Date  
September

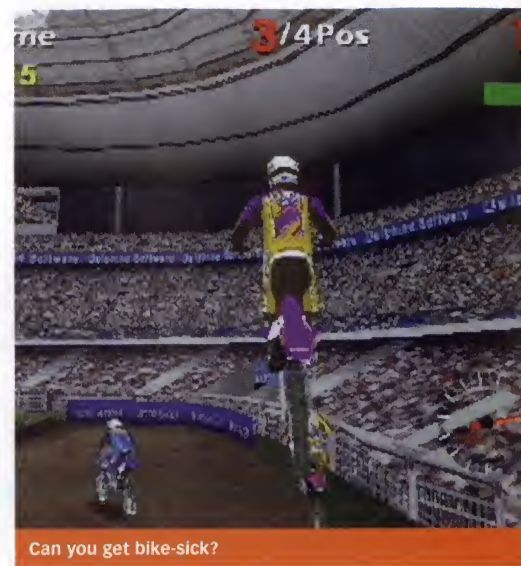
■ Players  
1 or 2



Wow, we've both got the same pants!



Smaaaaaaaack!



Can you get bike-sick?

**E**arlier games in this series have not been impressive. For some reason, Motorbike games have never hit it off in the way that Car Racing games - or even "Kart" racing games - have. This one looks like it'll shape up a lot better though. You never know, maybe this will be the one to turn the bike-ist trend around!

### SPICE IS THE VARIETY OF LIFE

...Or something like that. One of the most exciting features of this game is the large number of different modes you can play in - eight, to be precise. And each of these modes is

different enough from the others that it plays almost like a whole separate game. For example, the road racing mode has you on a powerful 250cc bike, hanging on for dear life as you race around famous real-world bike tracks, like Australia's own Eastern Creek. The physics of bike racing are accurately modeled, which means it's not just like a car race with a picture of a bike instead; your stability is a key issue, for example, and it's easy for the over-enthusiastic to come a cropper.

### THE HILLS ARE ALIVE...

In the dirt racing mode, gameplay is

extremely different. The track consists of a series of 'obstacles', which you have to negotiate by judicious use of both the steering and the vertical control buttons, to simulate leaning forward and leaning backward as you go over the different size hills. Successfully dealing with the obstacles is rewarded by a boost to your speed. This novel system may need some working out, but it's certainly an interesting approach. All in all, when the final version comes around, it may be just what all you rev-heads have been waiting for. Look out for a full review then!

James Cottee

## VIP

Pamela wants her most valuable asset on your screen

## FACT FILE

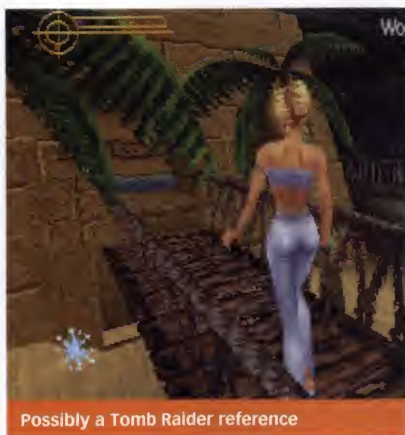
■ Publisher  
Ubi Soft

■ Developer  
Ubi Soft

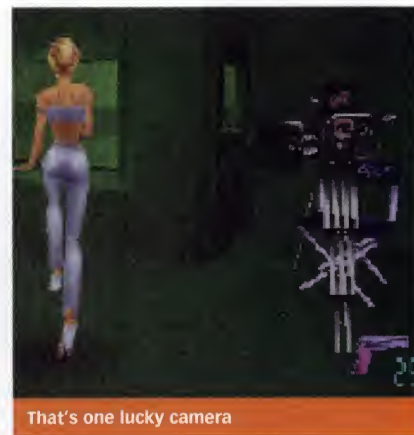
■ Genre  
Action/Adventure

■ Release Date  
November

■ Players  
1



Possibly a Tomb Raider reference



That's one lucky camera

**W**atched in countless countries across the globe, ranked amongst the most popular shows with the youth of today, Pamela Anderson-Lee's television franchise VIP is hot property. Hardly surprising then that there's a PlayStation game based on the show in the works. The TV show has it all, glamour, sex appeal, escapism, shallow characterisation, and of course Pamela herself.

Centering on the exploits of an elite Hollywood security firm that attaches bodyguards to the Beautiful People of the entertainment industry, VIP is a little lightweight in the realism department, and the latest we've seen of the game suggests that none of this has changed for the PSX version. A third person adventure game with a fairly standard mix of weapon use and puzzle solving, so far the bulk of VIP's chances seem to be riding on the fact it's based on a show most of its target audience

watches.

The PlayStation market is a mature one, and there is already a good spread of software like this, the Tomb Raider and Syphon Filter games being the most obvious examples. We haven't actually played the game yet, so we're only armed with prejudice and some new screen shots. By Christmas we should know if VIP's transition from late night TV to PSX is as smooth as Pamela's change from actress to producer.

James Cottee



# MEGA CHEATS

## SONY PLAYSTATION

- 016 Asteroids
- 017 Auto Destruct
- 018 Azure Dreams
- 019 B Movie
- 020 Battle Arena Tosh 3
- 021 Battle Arena Tosh 2
- 022 Beast Wars
- 023 Bio Freaks
- 024 Blast Clamber
- 025 Blast Radius
- 026 Blastro
- 027 Blood Omen
- 028 Bloody Roar
- 029 Bomberman World
- 030 Brain Dead 13
- 031 Brigadine
- 032 Bubsy 3D
- 033 Bushido Blade 2
- 034 Bust-a-groove
- 035 Bust-a-move 2
- 036 G: Contra Adventure
- 037 Capcom Gen 2
- 038 Capcom Gen 3
- 039 Cardinal Sin
- 040 Cart World Series
- 041 Circuit Breakers
- 042 Code Name Tenka
- 043 Collin McRae Rally
- 044 Colonisation
- 045 Colony Wars
- 046 Colony Wars: Vengeance
- 047 Command and Conquer
- 048 C&C Red Alert
- 049 Contra: Legacy of War
- 050 Cool Boarders 2
- 051 Cool Boarders 3
- 052 Courier Crisis
- 053 Crash Bandicoot
- 054 Crash Bandicoot 2
- 055 Crash Bandicoot 3
- 057 Croc Legend
- 058 Crusader No Remorse
- 059 Cybersled
- 060 Dark Forces
- 061 Dead or Alive
- 062 Death Trap Dungeon
- 063 Descent
- 064 Defcon 5
- 065 Destruction Derby 2
- 066 Diable
- 068 Dragon Seeds
- 069 Duke Nukem: Time to Kill
- 070 Duke Nukem: Meltdown
- 071 Dynamic Boxing
- 072 Elemental Gearbox
- 073 ESPN Extreme Games
- 074 Everybody's Gold
- 075 FIFA 98
- 076 FIFA 99
- 077 Fighting Force
- 078 Fighting Illusion: K1-Rev
- 079 Final Doom
- 080 Final Fantasy 7
- 081 Formula 1 97
- 082 Formula 1 98
- 083 Formula Karts
- 084 Forsaken
- 085 Frenzy
- 086 Future Cop LAPD
- 087 G Darius
- 088 G Police
- 089 Gex: Enter the Gecko
- 090 Ghost in the Shell
- 091 Gran Turismo
- 093 Grand Tour Racing
- 094 Guilty Gear
- 095 Heart of Darkness
- 096 Hot Shots Gold
- 097 I.S. Soccer Pro 98
- 098 Independence Day
- 099 Indy 500
- 100 J. McGrath Super x 98
- 102 Judge Dredd
- 103 K-1 Arena Fighters
- 104 Karero Deception
- 105 Kiona
- 106 Knockout Kings
- 107 Krazy Ivan
- 108 Kula World
- 109 Libero Grande
- 110 M.K. 4
- 111 M.K. Mythologies
- 112 M.K. Trilogies
- 113 Madden NFL 99
- 114 Madden NFL 98
- 115 Mass Destruction
- 116 Max Force
- 117 MDK
- 118 Medieval
- 119 Megaman Legends
- 120 Marvel Vs Street Fighter
- 121 Metal Gear Solid
- 122 Metal Slug
- 123 Micro Machines V3
- 124 Monster Trucks
- 125 Moto Racer
- 126 Moto Racer 2
- 127 Moterhead
- 129 N2O - Nitrous Oxide
- 130 Nascar 98
- 132 NBA Live 98
- 133 NBS Live 99
- 134 NBA Shoot Out 98
- 135 Need for Speed 2
- 136 Need for Speed 3
- 137 NFL Blitz
- 138 NFL Gameday
- 139 NHL 98
- 140 NHL 99
- 141 NHL Face Off 98
- 142 NHL Powerplay
- 143 Ninja: Shadows
- 144 Nuclear Strike
- 145 O.D.T.
- 146 Oddworld: Abe's Exodus
- 147 Oddworld: Abe's Odd
- 148 One
- 149 Pandemonium
- 150 Pandemonium 2
- 151 Parasite Eve
- 152 Parappa the Rapper
- 153 Pit Fall 3d
- 154 Pocket Fighter
- 155 Porche Challenge
- 156 Poy Poy
- 157 Psybadeck
- 159 R-Types
- 160 Rally Cross
- 161 Rally Cross 2
- 166 Reloaded
- 168 Resident Evil: DC
- 169 Ridge Racer Rev
- 170 Rival Schools
- 171 Riven: Sequel to Myst
- 172 Road Rash 3d
- 173 Rouge Trip: 2012
- 174 Running Wild
- 175 Scars
- 176 Shadow Master
- 177 Shane Warne Cricket
- 178 Side Pocket
- 179 Sim City 2000
- 180 Skull Monkeys
- 181 Small Soldiers
- 182 Smash Court 2
- 183 Soul Blade
- 184 Soviet Strike
- 185 Spice World
- 186 Spyro the Dragon
- 187 Star Wars: Master of Tor.
- 188 Steel Rain
- 189 Street Fighter Alpha 3
- 190 Street Fighter Coll 2
- 191 Street Fighter X+Alpha
- 192 Street Racer
- 194 Tekken 2
- 195 Tekken 3
- 196 Ten Pin Alley
- 197 Technu
- 198 Test Drive 4
- 199 Test Drive 5
- 200 Test Drive Off Road
- 201 Test Drive Off Road 2
- 202 Tetris Plus

- 203 The Fifth Element
- 204 The Lost World
- 205 The Unholy War
- 206 Theme Hospital
- 207 Theme Park
- 208 Thrill Kill
- 209 Thunder Force 5
- 210 Tiger Woods 99
- 211 Time Crisis
- 212 Tobal 2
- 213 Toca Touring Car
- 214 Toca Touring Car 2
- 215 Tokyo Highway Battle
- 216 Tomb Raider
- 217 Tomb Raider 2
- 218 Tomb Raider 3
- 219 Tomba
- 220 T.Makinen World Rally
- 221 Treasures of the Deep
- 222 Triple Play 98
- 223 Triply Play 99
- 224 Twisted Metal 2
- 225 Twisted Metal 3
- 226 V-Rally
- 227 V's
- 228 Vigilante 8
- 229 VMX Racing
- 230 VR Powerboat Racing
- 231 War Games: Defcom 1
- 232 Warcraft 2
- 233 Warhammer
- 243 WCW/Nitro
- 235 WCW/NWO Thunder
- 236 WCW V's The World G
- 238 Wild Arms
- 239 Wipeout 2097
- 240 WWF in you House
- 241 WWF War Zone
- 242 Xena: Warrior Princess
- 324 Need for Speed: High Stakes
- 325 Rollover
- 326 Rampage 2: Universal
- 327 Consider
- 328 Gex3: Deep cover
- 329 Max Power Racing
- 331 Chocobo Racing
- 332 Dead in the Water
- 333 Fisherman's Bait
- 334 Syphon Filter
- 335 Rugrats: Search Reapair
- 336 Bloody Roar 2
- 337 Silent Hill
- 339 Street Sk8er
- 340 Legend
- 341 Destrega
- 343 Military Madness
- 344 Eliminator
- 400 Wipeout 3
- 402 Dino Crisis
- 406 Tarzan
- 416 Jet Moto 3
- 418 Grand Theft Auto
- 419 Quake 2
- 420 Crash Team Racing
- 421 Mission Impossible
- 422 Nascar 2000
- 423 Ready to Rumble
- 424 Resident Evil
- 425 Army Men: Air Attack
- 426 Wu-Tang: Shaolin Style
- 427 Spyro2: Ripto's Rage
- 428 Vigilante 8: 2nd Offense
- 429 Tomorrow Never Dies
- 430 Supercross 2000
- 431 Medal of Honor
- 432 Jurassic Park: Warpath
- 433 Test Drive 6
- 450 Tom Raider: Last Rel
- 451 Street Fighter EX2 Plus
- 452 Lego Racer
- 453 40 Winks
- 454 Knockout Kings 2000
- 456 Fighting Force 2
- 458 NBA Live 2000
- 459 Sled Storm
- 460 Twisted Metal 2
- 461 Cool Boarders 4

## NINTENDO 64

- 245 Aerogauge
- 246 Allstar Baseball 99
- 247 Aero Fighter Assault
- 248 Automobili Lamborghini
- 249 Banjo Kazooie
- 250 Bio Freaks
- 251 Body Harvest
- 252 Bomberman 64
- 253 Bomberman Hero
- 254 Buckbumble
- 255 Bust-a-move
- 256 Chamellon Twist
- 257 Chopper Attack
- 258 Clay Fighter 63 1/3
- 260 Dark Ritt
- 261 Diddy Kong Racing
- 262 Doom 64
- 265 Extreme G2
- 266 F-Zero X
- 267 F1 Pole Position
- 268 F1 World Grand Prix
- 269 FIFA 98
- 270 Madden 64
- 271 Forsaken
- 273 Goldeneye
- 274 Hexen
- 275 I.S. Soccer 64
- 276 V-Rally
- 277 Iggi's Reckin Ball
- 278 Fighters Destruction
- 279 Madden 99
- 280 Mario Kart 64
- 282 M.K.4
- 283 M.K. Mythology's
- 284 M.K. Trilogi
- 286 Nagano Win Olympics
- 287 Nascar 99
- 288 NBA Hangtime
- 289 NBA in the Zone
- 290 NFL Quack 99
- 291 NHL Breakaway 98
- 292 NHL Breakaway 99
- 293 NHL 99
- 294 Nightmare Creatures
- 295 Offroad Challenge
- 296 Quake 64
- 299 Robotron X
- 300 S.C.A.R.S.
- 306 Star Wars: Shadows
- 309 Top Gear Overdrive
- 310 Top Gear Rally
- 311 Turok
- 312 Turok 2
- 314 Wayne Gretski 3d 98
- 315 WCW/NWO Revenge
- 345 Mario Party
- 346 Vigilante 8
- 347 Glover
- 348 NBA Live 99
- 350 Rush 2: Extreme Racing USA
- 351 Castlevania
- 352 Battle tanx
- 373 Fighting Force 64
- 374 WWF: Attitude
- 376 Star wars: Rogue Squadron
- 377 World Driver Championship
- 378 Super Smash Brothers
- 379 Superman
- 380 Quake 2
- 391 Infliherman - BH 64
- 392 All Star Baseball 99
- 393 Mario Gold
- 394 Monster Truck Madness
- 408 Road Rash 64
- 407 Duke Nuke:Zero Hour
- 410 WCW Mayhem
- 411 Gauntlet Legends
- 434 Rainbow 6
- 435 Monopoly
- 436 Supercross 2000
- 437 Turok Rage Wars
- 442 Gex3 Deep Undercover
- 443 Resident Evil 2
- 444 Nascar 2000
- 445 Battletanx Global Assault
- 446 Hot Wheels: Turbo Racing
- 447 Knockout Kings 2000
- 377 World Driver Championship
- 378 Super Smash Brothers
- 379 Superman
- 380 Quake 2
- 391 Infliherman - BH 64
- 392 All Star Baseball 99

- 393 Mario Gold
- 394 Monster Truck Madness
- 408 Road Rash 64
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- 435 Monopoly
- 436 Supercross 2000
- 437 Turok Rage Wars
- 442 Gex3 Deep Undercover
- 443 Resident Evil 2
- 444 Nascar 2000
- 445 Battletanx Global Assault
- 446 Hot Wheels: Turbo Racing
- 447 Knockout Kings 2000

## DREAMCAST

- 319 Godzilla Generation
- 320 Pen Pen Tri-Iceton
- 321 7th Cross
- 322 Sonic Adventure
- 323 Virtua Fighter 3TB
- 353 A-Life
- 354 Aero Dancer
- 355 Blue Stinger
- 356 Daytona USA 2
- 357 Evolution
- 358 Get Bass
- 359 House of the Dead 2
- 360 Marvel V's Capcom
- 361 Physic Force 2012
- 362 Power Stone
- 363 Puyo Puyo 4
- 364 Sega Rally 2
- 365 Super speed Racer
- 387 Air Force Delta
- 388 Buggy Heat
- 389 Soul Caliber
- 390 King of Fighters Dream Match 99

## NEW DREAMCAST

- 521 Expendable
- 522 Incoming
- 523 Jimmy White's 2: Cueball
- 524 Mortal Kombat Gold
- 525 NBA 2000
- 526 Rayman 2: The Great Escape
- 527 Ready 2 Rumble Boxing
- 528 Redline Racer
- 529 Soul Caliber
- 530 Speed Devils
- 531 Crazy Taxi
- 535 WWF: Attitude
- 533 Trick Style

## NEW PLAYSTATION

- 462 Rainbow 6
- 473 Thrasher: Skate & Dest.
- 474 Gran Turismo 2
- 475 Dukes of Hazzard
- 476 FIFA 2000
- 478 WWF Smackdown
- 479 Marvel VsCapcom: Clas
- 480 Killer Loop
- 489 KKND Krossfire
- 491 Soul Park Rally
- 490 Worm Armageddon
- 492 Die Hard Trilogy 2 Las Vegas
- 493 Fear Effect
- 494 Tiny Tank: Up You Arsenal
- 495 Army Men: Sarge's Heroe'
- 496 Syphon Filter 2
- 497 Medieval
- 498 Strott Sk8er 2
- 499 Ace Combat 3: Electrosphere
- 500 Gauntlet Legends

- 534 Legend Of Mana
- 501 Theme Park World
- 502 Covert Ops: Nuclear Dawn
- 503 Collin McRae Rally 2.0
- 504 Colony Wars 3: Red Sun
- 505 Crusaders Of Might And Magic
- 506 Populous: The Beginning
- 507 Eagle One: Harrier Attack
- 508 Nightmare Creatures 2
- 509 Grind Session
- 510 Jackie Chan: Stuntmaster
- 535 Test Drive: LeMans
- 536 Road Rash: Jailbreak
- 537 Toy Story 2

## NEW NINTENDO 64

- 513 PERFECT DARK
- 514 JEREMY MCGRATH SUPERCROSS 2000
- 515 INTERNATIONAL TRACK AND FIELD 2000
- 538 RIDGE RACER 64
- 516 BOMBERMAN 64: THE SECOND ATTACK
- 517 TOP GEAR RALLY 2
- 518 SUPERCROSS 2000
- 519 BATTLETANX: GLOBAL ASSAULT
- 520 EXCITEBIKE 64



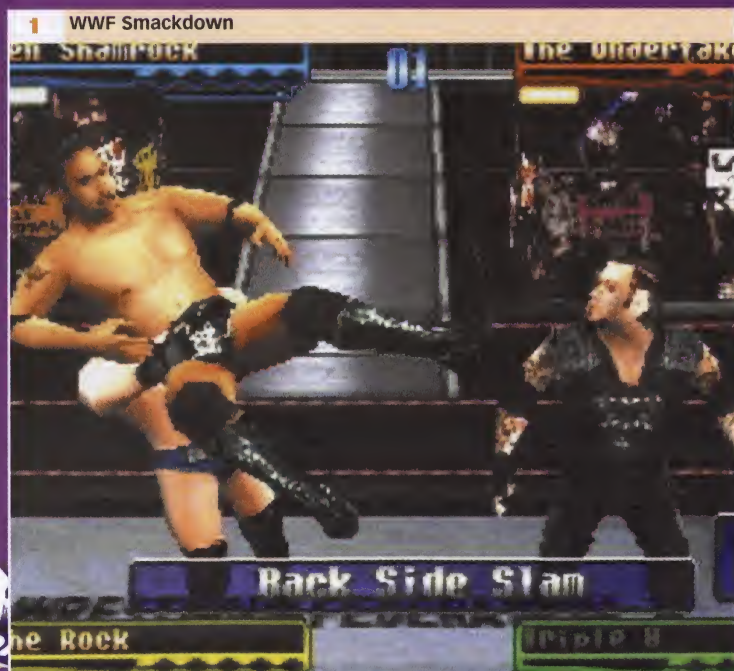


# PlayStation Top Twenty

This month we'd like to welcome a new partner to our best-sellers list, a research company called Inform. By electronically monitoring the sales of all video games from all the big retailers, they can generate a sales list with unprecedented accuracy! Have a look for yourself, this is where the PlayStation industry in Australia is at.

## Top 20 Best Selling PlayStation Games

- 1 WWF Smackdown!
- 2 Gran Turismo 2
- 3 Syphon Filter 2
- 4 Crash Bandicoot Warped Platinum
- 5 Medievil 2
- 6 Tony Hawk's Skateboarding
- 7 Muppet Race Mania
- 8 Driver
- 9 Spyro Platinum
- 10 Star Wars: Jedi Power Battles
- 11 Gran Turismo Platinum
- 12 Crash Bandicoot 2 Platinum
- 13 Need 4 Speed: High Stakes
- 14 Cricket 2000
- 15 Army Men 3D
- 16 Tekken 3 Platinum
- 17 Army Men: Sarge's Heroes
- 18 Crash Bandicoot Platinum
- 19 Tomorrow Never Dies
- 20 Metal Gear Solid Platinum



# What's the crew playing?



James Cottey



## JAMES' TOP FIVE

1. Vib Ribbon
2. Wip3out Special Edition
3. Bishi Bashi Special
4. Tekken Tag (PS2)
5. Terracon

## Vib Ribbon



The appeal generated by Vib Ribbon is hard to describe. How do you describe happiness? How do you define joy? For it is indeed a joy to behold, a rare title that doesn't let graphics get in the way of creative vision. Everyone who sees it falls in love with it instantly, and everyone who plays it gets addicted. I can't recommend it strongly enough, go to page 12 and see if you can't win one. Oh yes, the new Wipeout game also rocks, as does Terracon, but for different reasons. Vibri is my new hero.



Rodney Gall



## RODNEY GALL

1. Vib Ribbon
2. In Cold Blood
3. Resident Evil 3
4. SWAT 3 (PC)
5. Combat (Atari 2600)

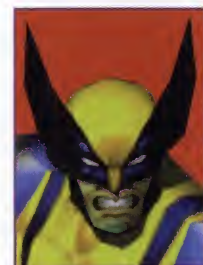
## Vib Ribbon



I could watch the how-to-play sequence in Vib Ribbon for hours on end. The music is hypnotising, and the rabbit is incredible. A stark contrast to In Cold Blood, which I found to be a bit of a disappointment, really. I mean when you look at it for what it is, an adventure game like the ones Sierra used to make, then you can approach it with clenched teeth and a reasonable attitude. But if you went in expecting the next Metal Gear Solid as I did, then you'll be sorely mistaken.



X-Men



## LEON TRANTER

- 1 X-Men
- 2 Tekken 3
- 3 Wip3out
- 4 Dead Or Alive 2 (DC)
- 5 Rollcage Stage 2



"Shall I call you Logan, Weapon X?" "No, you can call me WOLVERINE!" Shink-n-a shink-n-a shink-n-a! With the movie still relatively fresh in our minds, Activision is coming out with a decent fighting game worthy of the name "X-Men." Playing our preview code of it quite extensively, I found the play mechanics compared favorably to those in the done-to-death Streetfighter games, and with no pansies like Ken or Ryu clogging up the playlist, either! And then there's Rollcage, as if my head wasn't done in enough already.



# PLAYTEST CONTENTS

## Game of the month: Vib Ribbon



Every game featured in our PlayTest section has been reviewed independently and objectively by our team of writers. We aim to give an informed and comprehensive idea of what the game is about, and most importantly, whether the game is good or bad. Each game reviewed receives an overall score out of 100 which should be seen in context of the type of game it is and in relation to similar titles it is competing with.

### THESE FACTORS ARE AWARDED UP TO FIVE STARS:

<b>GRAPHICS</b>	Does the game look good and has it taken advantage of the available technology?
<b>SOUND</b>	The PlayStation offers developers the potential to create mind blowing audio. Have they?
<b>GAMEPLAY</b>	This is what it boils down to. Is the game enjoyable and fun to play, or will you hurl the joypad at the TV?
<b>DIFFICULTY</b>	Is the game difficult? Does it take a great deal of skill to play? The higher the mark here, the more difficult the game is.
<b>LIFESPAN</b>	How long can you expect this game to hold your interest? Will you play again after you have beaten it?
<b>PLAYERS</b>	Some games allow two or more players to take part, either alternately or simultaneously, and some can even be linked to a second PlayStation for head-to-head two-player action.
<b>GAME FEATURES</b>	Many games take advantage of after-market devices such as analogue controllers, steering wheels, Sony's PlayStation Mouse, various light guns, the Multi-tap four-player adaptor, memory cards, various peripherals and accessories.
<b>ALTERNATIVES</b>	A selection of games that are similar in concept or appeal to the one reviewed.

### WHAT OUR RATINGS MEAN:

<b>91 - 100%</b>	<b>AN INSTANT CLASSIC, YOU MUST PLAY THIS GAME!</b>
<b>81 - 90</b>	<b>EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD, WITH FLAWS YOU'D BARELY NOTICE</b>
<b>71 - 80</b>	<b>A GOOD EFFORT WITH A FEW NIGGLING FLAWS</b>
<b>61 - 70</b>	<b>A VERY AVERAGE GAME WITH A FEW PROBLEMS</b>
<b>51 - 60</b>	<b>HAS SOME NICE IDEAS, BUT COULD HAVE BEEN MUCH BETTER</b>
<b>41 - 50</b>	<b>A GAME WITH A GREAT DEAL MORE FLAWS THAN MERITS</b>
<b>31 - 40</b>	<b>PAINFUL TO PLAY, AND A WASTE OF MONEY</b>
<b>21 - 30</b>	<b>GETTING A SHOT FOR TETANUS IS MORE FUN THAN THIS</b>
<b>11 - 20</b>	<b>UTTER SHITE. GO OUT AND GET SOME SUN INSTEAD</b>
<b>01 - 10</b>	<b>IMPRESS YOUR FRIENDS WITH A COOL BLACK DRINK COASTER!</b>

## 48 IN COLD BLOOD

Sinister espionage action in the post-Cold War era. All is not as it seems in the tiny state of Volgia, and this big-budget adventure game will shock you to your very core.

## 52 GRIND SESSION

This first effort closely resembles Tony Hawk Skateboarding. The question is, with Tony Hawk 2 just around the corner, can Grind Session compete?

## 54 VIB RIBBON

From the maker of Parappa The Rapper and Um Jammer Lammy, Vib Ribbon is an incredible journey into the world of music. It's also completely mental!

## 56 LEGEND OF DRAGOON

This epic role playing game was over three years in the making, and it looks incredible!

## 58 WIP3OUT SPECIAL EDITION

The final Wip3out game for the PlayStation, and the best one yet by far!

## 60 FRONT MISSION 3

Giant robot action! Turn based combat has never been this cool.

## 62 TERRACON

Play one of those gray-headed aliens in a hypnotising blast-em-up extravaganza.

## 64 DESTRUCTION DERBY RAW

Drive cars around in circles, and smash the hell out of them!

## 66 RONALDO V-FOOTBALL

The worlds best soccer player puts his name to this interesting new title.

## 68 NBA SHOWTIME: NBA ON NBC

It a market with highly specialised basketball tastes, does this make the cut?

## 69 BISHI BASHI SPECIAL

This is about as much fun as you can have with your pants on.

## 70 STRIDER 2

A classic platformer from ten years ago gets updated to 3D.

## 71 TOMBI 2

Get ready for some new adventures in pig molesting.

## 72 HOGS OF WAR

It's like Worms Armageddon, but in 3D! And it's got the voice of Rick Mayall!

## 73 MOHO

Part android, part wrecking ball, all action! Diverse gameplay, amazing graphics!

## 74 DRAGON VALOUR

Dungeon crawling adventures akin to Zelda, but not as good.

## 75 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER

Why play a game of pool when the real thing beckons at the pub? Find out inside...

## 77 UEFA CHAMPIONSHIP LEAGUE 1999/2000

The soccer games field is pretty crowded. Is this game any different?

## 77 GHOUL PANIC

More G-Con 45 action from Namco, this time you're shooting up a haunted house.

## 79 ARMORINES: PROJECT S.W.A.R.M.

Kill the bugs! Save the world! Would you like to know more?

## 79 ECW Hardcore EVOLUTION

The ECW league is supposed to be "hardcore." This game is not.

## 80 PLAYER MANAGER 2000

Probably the best soccer management sim on the market, if you really want that.

## 80 WALT DISNEY MAGICAL RACING QUEST

It's like Crash Team Racing, only with Disney characters. For the young 'uns.

## 81 VAMPIRE HUNTER D

Role playing combat action against the vampire menace - goths take note.

## 81 GRUDGE WARRIORS

Post-apocalyptic dune buggy combat action. This is a budget title, and it looks it.



# IN COLD BLOOD

Help us Hugh Grant. You are our only hope.

## FACT FILE

■ Publisher  
Sony

■ Developer  
Revolution

■ Genre  
Adventure

■ Release Date  
Out Now

■ Expectations  
A sure-fire  
combination of  
Resident Evil and  
Metal Gear Solid!

## ALTERNATIVES

■ Metal Gear Solid  
■ Resident Evil 3



James on a good day

**W**hen I first heard about In Cold Blood, I was instantly very interested. An ambitious project attempting to blend the tactical stealth action of Metal Gear Solid with the adventure-style gameplay of Resident Evil, it certainly sounds very promising right from the start. With a story penned by professional script writers and a substantial investment of time and resources, I was wondering if perhaps Metal Gear Solid would be toppled from its perch as king of action-adventure gaming.

### CORD. JOHN CORD.

Central to the game is an involving story, a tale of espionage and betrayal set in the very near future. The player steps into the shoes of John Cord, who apparently is intended as a James Bond type of character. In Cold Blood dispenses with the cliché of tough, capable heroes by substituting a tough guy with an absolute pansy. While his demeanour may owe more to Hugh Grant than Pierce Brosnan, you'll be sympathising with him soon enough when he starts interacting with a comely Chinese spy in a plot twist reminiscent of Tomorrow Never Dies, ie mistrust morphing into co-operation and romance as a metaphor for international co-operation to fight global terrorism.

### WHAT'S THE STORY, PAL?

The heart of any adventure-style game is the story and how the characters and events help the story to unfold as the game progresses. You must infiltrate a top secret enemy base in a breakaway Russian republic and make contact with another agent there. Things then escalate rapidly, and the game becomes a race to stop World War III. Due to the involvement of professional script writers, one would expect one of the best stories to ever grace a game. Until one remembers that professional writers are responsible for the scripts of drivel like "Home And Away" and "Deep Space Nine". To be fair though the concept behind the story is a fairly cool one; You come to in a torture chamber, with a sinister General peering over your beaten, bleeding body. He's asking you questions with a sleazy Russian accent, and your memories return as you complete levels in the game. Whenever you die, you get a voice-over from Cord saying "No, that's not right." Thus the first seven levels are very linear, because only one set of events has led your character to his sorry situation. All the while you're wondering which of your contacts betrayed you, and the story does its best to obfuscate the truth. Of course, the objective at the end is to save the world, and there's only one desirable outcome there as well.



I don't know what this place is...



but it sure looks cool

### GET SUCKERED BY A REMORA

An interesting game feature is the way that cyberpunk elements have been grafted on to the action by the issuing of Cord with a sort of combat PDA. His REMORA computer serves as the game map, and is crucial for navigating the complex game environment. If you suspect there are guards on the other side of a door, using the REMORA will allow you to see them in advance so you can have your gun drawn and at the ready.

It's also useful for distinguishing the paths of guard robots, and interacting with computers, to read people's email and so forth. Make no mistake, this is the kind of adventure where you have to piece together clues to meet your objectives, and the sooner you get in the mindset of Cord and the hostile environment he works in, the better. Remember: The REMORA is your friend.

### THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING UNABLE TO PICK UP USEFUL ITEMS

The graphics seem somewhat sharper than those of the Resident Evil series or Silent Hill. Not overly detailed, but less cartoonish perhaps. However, this slightly superior graphical quality severely effects the gameplay. Characters, particularly Cord, move in a slow, very jerky fashion. Although some effort went into



# INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES CECIL



The producer of *In Cold Blood* was recently in Australia, and we had a chance to ask him a few questions about game design and what he wanted to achieve with *In Cold Blood*

**Station:** What were your inspirations for *In Cold Blood*?

**CC:** The movies *Pulp Fiction* and *The Usual Suspects*. They both impressed me with their innovative storytelling techniques, the way that the timeline of the story kept moving back and forth, bringing the narrative of cinema to the next level. That was the feel I wanted to bring to *In Cold Blood*.

You're being interrogated, and all that you can remember is that you've been betrayed. As you're asked questions, your memory returns and the story unfolds.

What inspired the plot for me was a material we only recently found out about called shungite. It's fascinating because it's found only in meteors, and it's totally unique. It shows properties such as superconductivity which the Soviets thought they could use to win the arms race, which is why they kept it a secret until a couple of years ago. I was fascinated by the idea of a small breakaway state from the old USSR coming across this secret, and using it to become very powerful.

**Station:** Have you tried to incorporate contemporary themes such as terrorism and information warfare?

**CC:** Yes, exactly.

As the story begins, you seem to be on a simple mission to rescue an American spy, and that a war is looming in the background between China and the US seems unrelated. But as the story progresses your role within it escalates, and it becomes a race to stop a nuclear holocaust.

**Station:** As the story progresses, do you keep chopping and changing perspective to keep the player guessing?

**CC:** Precisely. There are about five characters who could have betrayed you. This is about the number of main characters you'd expect from a motion picture. We try to play with the player in this sense.

**Station:** Can *In Cold Blood* be compared to *Metal Gear Solid*?

**CC:** No. While this is an action game, you can pull your gun you can also crouch and shoot,

you can sidestep, you can turn, the control mechanism is actually very smooth and very easy. There are superficial similarities, similar themes, and that in both games you can use stealth, but this is very much a story game.

**Station:** Did you find you learnt from your experience with *Broken Sword 1 & 2* what makes an efficient adventure game interface?

**CC:** We wanted to really break away from our previous point-and-click adventures. The thing about point and click adventures is that they were invented ten years ago, and they use the technology of ten years ago extremely well. As technology has advanced, so the opportunity for gameplay improvements have developed, and I think it's very dangerous to get stuck in a point and click environment. For example, these characters are polygonal, drawn onscreen using raytracing technology. That couldn't have been done ten years ago.

**Station:** Would you say there's replay value in this? Can you do things differently each time through?

**CC:** You can, the way the game is presented is that while there are certain points where the story advances, between these points you have complete freedom. I feel very strongly that to write a story that's as good as it can be, it has to have a plot that's relatively linear, and that there's one ending. If you allow for lots of different endings, then you can end up with something like *Silent Hill*. While *Silent* is an excellent game, it's not driven by a strong plot.

**Station:** You got in professional writers from the BBC to work on the dialogue. Care to comment on that?

**CC:** We brought in specialists from many fields to work on the game, writers, musicians and so forth, but you also need the game side of things, the control system and the interface. When the two come together, then you have good gameplay. I would argue that we're actually a level above these people. We've got to get all the things that are required for a film, but we also have to make the game work in its own right. It's actually incredibly complicated. When we work with people outside the industry, we have to guard the game side of things very carefully, and they have to contribute on our terms.

**Station:** There's something old-school about the way this game is laid out. You've been

in the industry making games for almost 20 years now, since the days of the ZX81. You've seen the entire industry evolve, have you picked up different concepts on the way through?

**CC:** One of the things I think is very strong about *In Cold Blood* is the wide range of gameplay. It can be dangerous to include sub games that have nothing to do with the main game like they did in the 80s, because then you're mixing game styles. We've tried to put in a very strong mix, but all within a coherent environment.

**Station:** So it's not about immense amounts of frustration as you finally learn how to interact with the environment the way the game expects you to.

**CC:** Hopefully not!

You really need to use your REMORA to periodically scan the area to judge where the guards are.

In *Metal Gear Solid* you find yourself looking at the radar screen all the time and playing the game by following the radar. We really, really wanted to avoid that. It's a difficult game to communicate, as it doesn't fall into easy categories, like it's a *Resident Evil* or it's a *Metal Gear Solid*. We've really tried to innovate in the way that we mix the narrative and the action together.

**Station:** This would be designed to motivate the player, so they don't think that every level is exactly like the last. You're trying to keep them on their toes.

**CC:** Indeed. Indeed.

**Station:** Is it possible for John's memory to play tricks on him as he remembers events throughout the game?

**CC:** No, that would be a bridge too far in terms of complexity. We were toying with the idea at one point of allowing the player to play the missions in different orders, but that would only confuse the player as to what's going on.

**Station:** Was there anything you felt you left out? Put it this way, what are you looking forward to doing on the PlayStation2?

**CC:** Artificial Intelligence. The PlayStation as it stands just doesn't have the processing power to handle all of the AI we would have like to, but this is something there'll be much more scope for on the PS2.





Obi Wan disables the tractor beam



"Cartman, you've got a massive cyborg pod sticking out of your ass."

## GAME FEATURES

- Memory Card
- Single Player
- Dual Shock Compatible



Another action packed screen shot



The boring life simulator

implementing some ray tracing effects, simpler graphics and smoother movement would have been a much better idea. Apart from the sluggish speed and jerkiness, movement is further complicated by the difficulties in navigating and interacting with the environments. Whereas the characters in Resident Evil smoothly navigate their environments and interacting with objects is simply a matter of being close enough and facing in roughly the right direction, In Cold Blood is very finicky in comparison. Sometimes you have to approach an object you want to examine from a certain angle. Furthermore, sometimes when an object has no function you are not given an explanation like "It's not useful", the game simply ignores your efforts. This leaves you wondering whether the object is useless or you are simply standing in the wrong spot.

### GUN CONTROL

Judging by the title you'd be forgiven for thinking the In Cold Blood was a veritable slaughter-fest. This is not the case. Though you can draw your gun at any time, if you try to shoot people outside of a combat situation, Cord will say something like "No. He might still be useful". Even in a gun fight, I had a situation where my gun simply wouldn't fire despite having plenty of ammo and frantically hammering at the fire button, leading to my prompt death. I assume that this was because the game wanted me to use stealth to solve the puzzle. This is typical of the way the game uses unrealistic means to force you to follow its linear story. If shooting an essential character is a bad idea, then I should have to find out the hard way, instead of being told "you can't do that" like I was playing an old text-adventure game.

### SUMMARY EXECUTION

In Cold Blood looks so great on paper, but problems arise when you try and compare it to more action-oriented titles like Syphon Filter. We are promised an espionage action-adventure with a great plot and complex characters. Instead we get an adventure game with a flawed plot and characters that often react in an unconvincing fashion. However, if you ignore all of the game's pre-release hype and play the game expecting the usual stupid story and dumb NPCs of a PlayStation adventure, perhaps you will enjoy In Cold Blood. There is certainly a lot of game there. There are many puzzles to solve, and a wide range of enemies that get tougher as the game progresses. But the game is definitely not in the league of other classic action-adventures out there.

Rodney Gall

Australian  
Station

■ GRAPHICS:	★★★	Nice enough, but lack character and dramatically slow the game
■ SOUND:	★★	Horrible voice acting, weak combat sounds
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★	This is an adventure game with an "action game interface"
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★★★	Apart from solving puzzles, controlling Cord is a challenge too
■ LIFESPAN:	★★★★	Long involved story, but the linearity rules out replay value

71  
PERCENT



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## **INSIDE THE AUGUST 23 ISSUE...**

THE TOP 50 GAMES OF ALL TIME  
EXCLUSIVE FINAL FANTASY IX REVIEW  
DIABLO II REVIEW AND STRATEGY GUIDE



[much more]



# GRIND SESSION

If you can't wait for Tony Hawk 2, maybe this is the fix you need

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Sony
- Developer  
Shaba Studios
- Genre  
Skateboarding
- Release Date  
August
- Expectations  
A significant step up from the gaming goodness Tony Hawk delivered

## ALTERNATIVES

- Tony Hawk's Skateboarding
- Thrasher: Skate and Destroy
- Street Sk8er



What do you get when you take Tony Hawk Skateboarding, copy it exactly, and not really do anything to improve it? Grind Session

**G** Grind Session is one of the best skateboarding games that you'll ever play. In fact, it might even be one of the best sporting, no wait forget that, one of the best pieces of software that you can get on the PlayStation to date.

It's got everything that you could want in a game - exciting, over-the-top yet still rooted in reality action, crisp graphics, atmosphere, and it appeals to everyone, from hardcore skaters who want a chance to ride as their heroes, through to anyone that just wants to waste a few hours away.

Only one problem with Grind Session though. It's already been released (way back in 1999 actually), and it was called Tony Hawk

Skateboarding. Except it was a little more responsive, and it has a little more credibility. And furthermore, while THS is still a better game than Grind Session, THS2 will be out very soon, and it will totally blow Grind Session out of the water.

### LOOKING OVER TONY HAWK'S SHOULDER

I'm seriously at a loss as to how to review Grind Session. Should it be reviewed as a stand-alone piece of software, and judged purely on how much fun it is (or isn't) to play? Or should it be compared to the King of Skateboarding, Tony Hawk? I'm going to take the latter, because you should always be compared to your most powerful competition. Also, should Grind Session be given an automatic fail because it is so close to THS, or should we just take the opinion of "imitation is the best form of flattery" and that Neversoft (the developers of THS) should be blushing with pride?

When you first sit down and start playing Grind Session, the similarities to THS will instantaneously hit you in the mouth like a soggy teabag. Firstly, the trick system is identical. You hold down X to jump, square and circle are your trick buttons and triangle is your grind / handplant button. If you can perform amazing moves in Tony Hawk, you can do it here. Even the way the combos are chained together is exactly the same! The way the whole gameplay

mechanics have been ripped off is shameful, but still a lot of fun. Kinda like watching porn. Or not.

### LOOKS FAMILIAR...

Now let's look at the graphics of Grind Session. The skaters look quite crisp and sharp, and they move quite smoothly. This might be the only area where Grind Session outshines THS. The environments are identical to THS though, right down to the whole Burnside level being an exact copy of the same level in THS. Yes, this level is modelled on a real-life skate park, but you'd think that once the developers saw that it was used in THS they'd go and get another skate park to use.

Moving right along to sound. Thankfully, Grind Session doesn't use exactly the same songs and artists as Tony Hawk, although if they did I wouldn't have been too surprised. The music used is from groups of rockers and rappers (which is just like THS...hmmm), from guys as diverse as KRS-1, Kool Keith and NoFX. The sound effects sound exactly the same as some other skateboarding game that was released in 1999, but I can't remember the name of it right now.

Alright, so apart from the graphics, gameplay, environments and sound, all of which are copied from Tony Hawk, so far Grind Session is a totally original, awesome game to play. Thankfully there are a few original ideas that

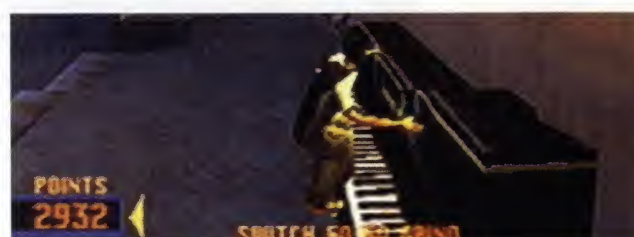






### GAME FEATURES

- Memory Card
- 1 or 2 Players
- Dual Shock Compatible



have been used in Grind Session, but they're not enough to make it an original title.

#### NEW FEATURES! REALLY!

The most original idea in Grind Session would have to be the "Skater's Eye" feature. When you hold down L2, you go into a first-person perspective mode (your skater has stopped moving though, so don't think that you can perform any tricks in this mode). This helps you out a lot when you're going through unknown levels and need to know exactly where to go for the big jumps (which means big points), and it also helps give you an additional perspective for when you think you know the



course inside and out.

The Skater's Eye works well in combination with another feature, which is the Tech Lines. These are sections of each level that will score you big points. For example, there might be an inclined section that you can ramp off, then hit another ramp, then hit a rail. The Tech Lines would colourfully illustrate this, and help novices get on the right track (pardon the pun) to performing high-scoring moves.

In the end though, the few different features that Grind Session offers aren't enough to make it any different from Tony Hawk. It's just far too similar. If you've got Tony Hawk, you don't need this game. If you don't have Tony Hawk and you want a skateboarding game, get Tony Hawk! A great game, but so similar to the best skateboarding game released, why would anyone need to purchase it?

Wesley Willis

# Australian Station

GRAPHICS:	★★★	Looks quite slick, especially the 'boarders
SOUND:	★★★★	Decent tunes and quality sound effects
GAMEPLAY:	★★★	Almost as good as THS.
DIFFICULTY:	★★★★	Mainly due to the slightly unresponsive controls
LIFESPAN:	★★★★	Plenty to unlock and explore. Create a skater mode as well

# 78

PERCENT



# VIB RIBBON

I can see the music!

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Sony
- Developer  
SCEI
- Genre  
Music
- Release Date  
August
- Expectations  
The latest music game from the maker of Parappa the Rapper! Woo-hoo!

## ALTERNATIVES

- Parappa The Rapper,
- Um Jammer Lammy



Welcome to the world of Vibri the rabbit and his magic ribbon. You won't be leaving...



Evolution has its rewards



Run, Vibri, Run!

The genre of music games didn't really exist until the PlayStation came along. The ability to stream CD quality audio and full motion video off a game disc while generating elaborate graphics on screen has made home gaming a viable alternative to the new kingpins of the arcades, with home versions of *Guitar Freaks*, *Beatmania* and even *Dance Dance Revolution* bringing light and laughter into countless living rooms.

That another music game has come along is no surprise, but the visual approach taken by *Vib Ribbon* is quite a shock. In a climate where game programmers are squeezing the PlayStation for every last possible polygon, this new game from designer Masaya Matsuura has taken a massive leap backwards in graphic expectations. *Vib Ribbon* is delivered entirely in monochrome wireframe graphics, and looks like it would have been more at home in the arcades of the late 1970s along with *Asteroids* and *Battlezone*.

For the record, this is the latest from the man who brought us *Parappa The Rapper* and *Um Jammer Lammy*. But where these past music games were filled with the colourful cartoons of Rodney Greenblat, *Vib Ribbon* is adorned with graphics that are literally the simplest necessary to get the message across. Anything more would only get in the way.

## STUPIDLY SIMPLE

From a visual standpoint, *Vib Ribbon* could almost be compared to a side-scrolling platformer. As an audio track plays off the game CD, a waveform is generated and scrolls from right to left across the screen. This is not the exact wave formed by the music, but a stylised representation. Musical events are broken down by the game algorithm into one of four shapes; a block, pit, loop or sawtooth pattern.

You control a happy-go-lucky rabbit called Vibri, who's electronically manipulated Japanese dialogue is thankfully subtitled at every turn. He must navigate the vibrating "ribbon" by one of four actions that are set to L1, R1, down and X. This simple control system becomes a rapid-fire game of twister on later levels, as the four basic shapes can be combined into hybrid symbols, and these can only be passed by hitting their constituent buttons simultaneously.

Yet more complexity arises from these seemingly simple beginnings. Aside from increasing the speed of the music, and thus the pace of the ribbon, other factors can warp play against the delicate tolerances of the player's mind. The perspective by which the ribbon is viewed can zoom in and out, and also swivel around in 3D space, so much so that the entire perspective of the game can be reversed with

Vibri moving from right to left.

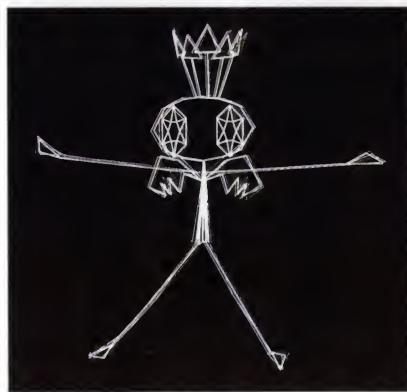
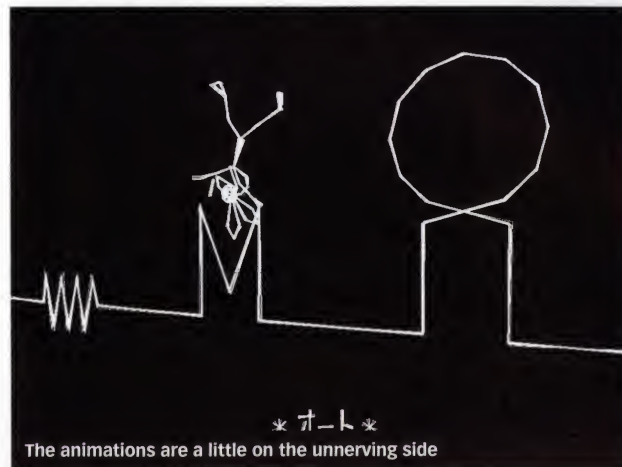
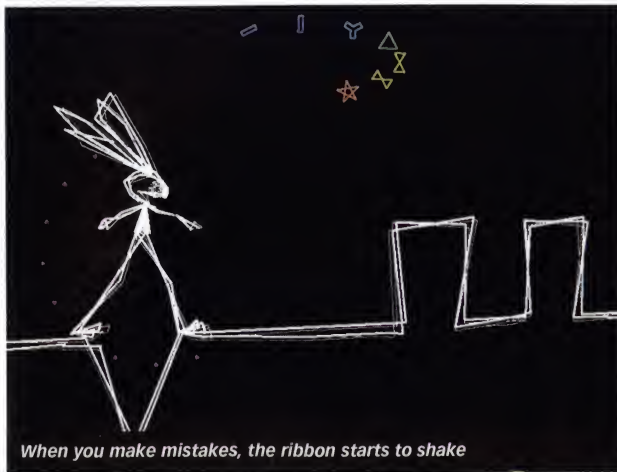
The ribbon itself can start to twist around its axis as it approaches, so that oncoming shapes must be recognised from odd angles. But most disturbing of all is the way that not all shapes move at the same speed. The player will before long be judging the rate that incoming shapes approach, constantly adjusting one's behaviour as it becomes impossible to anticipate when they'll overtake each other.

## DARK PHILOSOPHY

Central to the theme of this work are the issues of evolution and mortality. From Vibri's starting position as an adult rabbit, repeated, successful play is rewarded by evolution into an angelic figure, bedecked with wings and halo. In this celestial form he glides over the ribbon with grace and poise, but a single mistake will devolve him back to mortal form. From there repeated mistakes will cause the ribbon to wobble and shake in an ungainly fashion, before Vibri himself devolves into a lower life form.

From rabbit it's a slippery slope down to a sort of frog-like creature, and from there he can degenerate into a sort of TV-headed sperm. At each stage it's possible to evolve back up the ladder, but the probability of this decreases with every passing bar. Ultimately Vibri must face the





### GAME FEATURES

- Memory Card
- Single Player
- Dual Shock Compatible

certainty of death, and how long this takes depends on how you, the player, adjust to the pulse of life within his linear universe.

#### SIMPLY STUPID?

Within the genre that Vib Ribbon occupies, it is by far the most innovative and polished program ever produced. It evokes in the player a genuine sense of existing within a world of pure musical shapes, one where the progression of a song that we normally take for granted becomes a life-and-death struggle for survival on the part of our heroic rabbit. The animations are all light-hearted and accessible, the menus are friendly and uncluttered, and every pore of this game

radiates child-like glee.

Of course, this is the kind of game the Addams Family would give their kids to play with. It's the single freakiest program that any of us have ever seen, and the fact that it displays both the most primitive graphics ever made for the PlayStation and a creative vision that's terrifyingly unique is going to intimidate more than a few players. Not to mention the fact that by entering a market where the most polished surfaces attract all the attention, pushing a game that looks like it belongs on the Commodore 64 is tantamount to suicide.

But considering the nature of the beast, it's a bargain, and not only for its new release price

being placed at a very attractive \$39.95. The number of levels to try is limited only by your CD collection. Any music CD can be utilised for extra levels, and seeing your favourite musical genre come alive in three dimensions is a whole new experience in itself. The reverse is also true, as the six tracks provided by J-pop group Laugh And Beats for the game disc make excellent listening in and of themselves. There's no denying that this is a niche product, but if you fit into it, then Vib Ribbon has been tailored exclusively for your demented tastes.

James Cottee

# Australian Station

GRAPHICS:	★	We won't kid you around on this one
SOUND:	★★★★★	Pop in your favourite CD and watch it come to life
GAMEPLAY:	★★★★★	Magical super happy party fun as only the Japanese know how
DIFFICULTY:	★★★★	It starts off warped and gets worse
LIFESPAN:	★★★★	How can you tire of perfection?

# 90

PERCENT



# LEGEND OF DRAGOON

Sony's Epic 4 CD RPG is making its way Down Under

## FACT FILE

■ Publisher  
Sony

■ Developer  
Sony

■ Genre  
RPG

■ Release Date  
TBA

■ No. of CD's  
4

■ Expectations  
Classy classic style  
fantasy RPG from  
Sony with a neat  
battle system.

## ALTERNATIVES

■ Final Fantasy 8  
■ Legend of Legaia  
■ Saga Frontier 2



*Legend of Dragoon was over three years in the making. Looks like it was time well spent*



*"I thought you said fancy dress!"*



*"Ever wondered what your insides look like?"*

**M**an, are we getting an RPG feast this year! I mean Legend of Legaia, Saga Frontier 2, Star Ocean Second Story, Grandia and Vagrant Story out soon. These are some of the best RPG's to ever hit the grey box and they have been keeping even the hardest of the hardcore role-play gamers busy for weeks. But it doesn't stop there, add to this impressive list Sony's mega epic 4 CD adventure Legend of Dragoon.

Legend of Dragoon was a huge undertaking, around 3 years in the making, lots of developers and heaps of cash. The inevitable question of "Yeah, but how does it compare to FF8?" is

bound to crop up so we'll just get it out of the way here and now. Sony's inexperience in the epic multi-CD RPG does show through a little in places and Legend of Dragoon is not the FF8 killer that Sony hoped it would be. Don't get me wrong though, 'cause overall, this game rocks and Square will be watching it closely.

**MESMERISING CG MOVIES AND EYE CANDY**  
Graphically, Legend of Dragoon really shines and is testament to Sony's visual mastery. The sound track won't cause you to rush out at buy it at your first opportunity. However, it does have some interesting medieval tunes and the

battle and boss themes are catchy.

The dramatic opening CG movie of soldiers trashing the town of Seles is right up there with the best you'll see on the playStation. Although they are a bit sparse on the first CD, it's a sweet appetiser of the things in store for you as you progress through the game.

Pre-rendered backgrounds are intricately detailed and we'll forgive you if you momentarily think you are in a CG movie. They're pure magic, in fact: get this, Legend of Dragoon has over 650, yep you read correctly, over 650 pre-rendered backgrounds. By the time you hit the second CD you'll start to appreciate that some







**GAME FEATURES**

Memory Card

1 or 2 Players

Dual Shock Compatible

very talented artists put a lot of effort into this game.

### THE DIVINE TREE OF LIFE, MOON CHILDREN AND DRAGONS

If anything lets Legend of Dragoon down (and that's not much), it's the plot, which takes a long time to go anywhere. Then again, some might say that the game is initially relaxing and doesn't throw you in the deep end too soon.

Legend of Dragoon is set in a Middle Ages fantasy world and tells the story of how all life was created from a magical tree. Of the 108 races in this world there were humans, dragons and winglies, a sort of winged human. The winglies used magic to enslave the humans, but the humans rebelled in a great battle known as the "Dragon Campaign" when they learnt how to use dragon spirits to gain immense power.

The game picks up 11,000 years after the Dragon Campaign. The winglies and dragons are all but vanished and the rest of the races are battling it out for supremacy. It has you playing the stereotyped hero Dart, a spiky haired, sword slashing youth hell bent on revenge for the death of his parents and the destruction of his hometown (sound familiar) by the Black Monster.

Things go from bad to worse when Sandora

soldiers trash the small village that took Dart in (opening CG movie). The soldiers have snatched the Mayor's daughter Shana, who is coincidentally your childhood sweetheart, and taken her to Hellana Prison because they believe she possesses some sort of incredible power.

Dart's quest begins with Shana's rescue. You also pick up various companions as you progress through the game with the ultimate goal being to find and kill the Black Monster. However, all is not as it seems, who is the Black Monster and who is the real enemy?

### ADDITIONS AND MAGIC

If Legend of Dragoon lacks a little in the plot it makes up for it in the fighting system and user interface. Nice touches like the optional triangle that floats over Dart's head which changes colour when lurking enemies are close. This can take the pain of continual random battles away and allows you, to some extent, to pick and choose when you fight.

Another innovation is the additions of combos, not unlike Squal's gunblade in FF8 - only better. Nearly all the characters are able to do combos except for Shana, who may be cute but is a major suck in the attack department, so exchange her for Rosè as soon as you can.

Additions work like this: as you attack an

enemy 2 grid squares meet and flash in the center of the target, with the correct timing you can add an extra attack or counter attack on your enemy. No taping down the attack button and catching a snooze in this game. Stuff up an addition and some bosses will pick you up mid-combo and slam you for being lame.

When Dart and his companions gain special crystals they also inherit a dragon spirit and the ability to become a winged dragoon. Dragoons have neat combos of their own and are a bit like a GF in FF8 with similar awe-inspiring attacks but without the complicated junctioning. Magic is also interactive and uses opposing elements, like water on a fire enemy, for greater effect. Mad button mashing, akin to playing Track and Field 2, while casting a spell will also raise the damage levels on your enemy.

There's no 2 ways about it; Legend of Dragoon it is a wonderful game with some of the best graphics the aging Playstation is likely to see. Sony's attention to detail makes this game suitable for both beginner and seasoned gamer alike. In fact, Sony is so pleased with the game that there are even rumours of a sequel for the PS2.

Scott Riddiford

Australian  
**Station**

■ <b>GRAPHICS:</b>	★★★★★	Some of the best you're likely to see
■ <b>SOUND:</b>	★★★	Interesting, but won't win any Grammy's
■ <b>GAMEPLAY:</b>	★★★★★	Excellent battle system with easy to use menus
■ <b>DIFFICULTY:</b>	★★★	Get your combos happening early
■ <b>LIFESPAN:</b>	★★★	A good 80+ hours of game play

**89**  
PERCENT



# WIP3OUT SPECIAL EDITION

Don't techno for an answer

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Sony
- Developer  
Psygnosis Leeds
- Genre  
Racing
- Release Date  
Out Now
- No. of CD's  
One
- Expectations  
This combines the best of the Wipeout series in one feature-packed game.

## ALTERNATIVES

- Rollcage Stage 2
- Wipeout 2097  
Platinum



*It's a pity Wipeout Fusion won't be a launch title for the PS2. Still, this game is good for a fix*

**W**ipeout: the definitive futuristic racing experience on the PlayStation. Combining fluid graphics, polished gameplay and music from world famous electronic acts, the Wipeout series has been a best seller and a fan favourite from the console's launch through to the present day. Set in a terminally groovy future, racers from around the world do deadly battle with rockets and lasers in the fastest, deadliest and most popular motor sport ever devised.

Although the unconventional physics engine used to define the anti-gravity racing craft in the game can be a little off-putting at first, once you've beaten the learning curve you'll find that too much Wipeout is barely enough. The appeal comes from the sensation of speed, conveyed as you scrape past neon and steel and other players in a constant battle for not only victory but survival. For if you don't make the checkpoints in time, your craft is programmed to self destruct...

### THE FUTURE OF RACING

The series has come a long way from it's beginnings as a launch title for PAL territories back in '95. In '96 came Wipeout 2097, offering a swathe of improvements including more weapons, tracks, weather effects and better graphics overall. From there it was a long wait until late '99 and Wip3out, which implemented

high resolution graphics, two player split screen options and a wealth of new game modes. The next genuine new entry into the world of Wipeout will come in the form of Wipeout Fusion for the PS2 early next year, but for fans who can't wait that long there is now hope in the form of Wip3out Special Edition.

This is not an entirely new game, but a best-of collection of material from the first three games. The game engine from Wip3out, arguably the most technically advanced, has been used to this end, and has been tweaked considerably. One of the biggest complaints about Wip3out was that the words on the menu screens were too hard to read, but this has been corrected by the use of larger, legible lettering. Also auto loading of game progress has been implemented so that when you boot up you can get straight to the action.

In addition to the 12 tracks from Wip3out, 3 tracks have been included from the first Wipeout, and 5 from the second. There are also two brand new tracks, but these aren't particularly imaginative in design, being basic oval shapes. Across the board the colour scheme from Wip3out has been used, so the vibrant tones from the first two games have been translated into a more gray experience. For instance, in the many pitch black tunnels in Wipeout 2097, it's now possible to actually see where you're going.





## "EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN"

Take a look at these screen shots. They're tracks from the first two Wipeouts, now brought to you in high resolution and more shades of gray than were previously thought to exist. Also note the lack of advertising for Red Bull and FSOL. These tawdry pieces of propaganda have been replaced with some stylish billboards from the Designer's Republic, the graphic design group responsible for the unique look of the Wipeout series.



Odessa Keys (Wipeout 2097)

Talons Reach (Wipeout 2097)

Terramax (Wipeout)



The level of detail put into the game is quite amazing, considering how fast you pass it all



Coloured rocket trails - nice touch



Autopilots are for girls!

### CUTTING EDGE OR BARGAIN BIN?

The music is exactly the same mix from Wipeout, a handful of original tracks by DJ Sasha, his hit single Xpander, and some other tracks chosen by him to fit the mood. These include Under The Influence by the Chemicals, and tracks by Paul Van Dyk, The Propellorheads, and

others. While there's nothing wrong with the mix, being a roll call of some of the finest trance 1999 had to offer, it seems a little over familiar, as though they could have done something to make the game more unique.

While at first it may seem as though only eight circuits have been added to the mix, in

reality this means more of an exponential increase in variety via the options they're now exposed to. Tracks from Wipeout 1 and 2 that had previously been played to death can now be re-conquered in tournament play, scorched to the bone in the "Eliminator" death match mode, or crowded out in four player races over a link cable. Not to mention the subtle differences in play created by the full lineup of Wip3out weapons, and the fact that there is a "mirror" option that effectively double the number of tracks in total.

### IT'S STILL NOT PERFECT

While the approach used is arguable consistent, there are a few sticking points that diehard fans may take issue with. The two hardest, most distinctive tracks from Wipeout 2097, Vostok Island and Spilskanke were not included. Likewise, none of the trademark tracks from the first two games made the cut, perfectly good scores by Leftfield, The Future Sound Of London, The Prodigy, Fluke and The Chemical Brothers. All of their songs had distinctive beats, and the almost ambient mix used in the third game has been criticised as much as it's been praised.

It's interesting to note that on the menu screens this game still refers to itself as "Wipeout Version 3.0." It would be more correct to call this Wipeout 3.5, if we're to follow the lexicon of programmers to the letter. Special Edition has both the properties of a bug fix and a mission disc, but it is not truly a new game in and of itself. It's good to see the developers behind this tweaking their product to perfection, but this is really pushing the definition of a sequel. If you're a diehard Wipeout fan, then this will cast a new light on some of your old favourites, and if any of you somehow missed Wip3out, then this a perfect opportunity to get the definitive version. But if you're more of a casual gamer, and already have Wipeout 2 or 3, then this could be something of a white elephant.

James Cottey

## GAME FEATURES

- Memory Card
- 1 to 4 Players
- Dual Shock Compatible
- Link Cable 2 Consoles
- Negcon Controller



Australian  
**Station**

■ GRAPHICS:	★★★★	High resolution and very smooth, if a little gray
■ SOUND:	★★★★★	Excellent techno soundtrack mixed by DJ Sasha
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★★★	Arguably not as good as in 2097
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★★★	Phantom Class is as blistering as ever
■ LIFESPAN:	★★★★	Wipeout fans will find a world of wonder within!

**91**  
PERCENT



# FRONT MISSION 3

Quake III meets Battle Chess in this futuristic strategy game

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Sony
- Developer  
Squaresoft
- Genre  
Tactical Strategy/RPG
- Release Date  
August
- Expectations  
Great Strategy but  
won't win medals for  
graphics

## ALTERNATIVES

- Final Fantasy  
Tactics
- Vandal Hearts 1&2



There's just no substitute for large scale mech combat



**J**udging by the lack of recent releases, turn-based strategy games have not enjoyed the same fanfare that RPGs have been receiving. Is that about to change? Could Square's Front Mission 3 do for strategy games what their FF7 did for RPG's? We think it just might.

You will be forgiven if you haven't heard of the Front Mission series before, as FM3 is the first of the very popular Japanese series to be released to the West. In a nutshell, FM3 could be likened to playing Quake III Arena on a

chessboard, with the main stars of the game being dirty, great butt-kicking Mech Warriors, affectionately known as Wanzers.

The opening CG movie says it all, looking more like a trailer for the next Arnie terminator blockbuster than an innocent PlayStation game. In addition, FM3 contains a plot that has more depth to it than just relentlessly blasting anything in your path as you battle to save the day.

Don't get me wrong, watching sizable chunks of your enemy (in this case metal) splatter as you strafe them with a plasma particle gun is worryingly satisfying. It's just that a good plot adds to the longevity of the game.

### FIGHT WITH THEM OR AGAINST THEM, THAT IS THE QUESTION?

The year is 2112 and there is an uneasy peace. North and South America formed a fragile alliance known as USN: United States of the New Continent, back in 2020. In an attempt to counter this superpower, the South Pacific and East Asian countries formed the OCU: Oceania Community Union, in 2026. However, after several coups and arms conspiracies the OCU is becoming unstable and several East Asian countries have started a movement for independence.

This is about where you step in as Kazuki Takemura, a tech student and part-time Wanzers test pilot for Kirishima Industries Battle Wanzers. When an explosion occurs at the JDF: Japanese Defense Force Base in Yokosuka, all hell breaks loose. Kazuki and his friends find themselves thrust into an engrossing saga of violence and treachery.

One of the interesting things about FM3 is the number of splits or alternate scenarios available and this extends the game play to around a whopping 150 hours. An innocent "yes" or "no" to helping your friend Ryogo to deliver some Wanzers to the JDF will have you playing either the "Emma" or "Alisa" story line.

Even though you always end up with the 4 main players, other playable characters change. Some characters will actually fight against you or you will not see them at all. In the first story, the JDF think you are a USN spy, while the second story line has you in the USN's bad books.

This is not where the changes in scenarios finish. Other situations, depending on your skill or choices made, will see you change direction as well. In fact, you'll even get to do an Australian mission if you play your cards right.





## GAME FEATURES

- Memory Card
- Single Player
- Dual Shock Compatible



### UPGRADERS DELIGHT

What makes this game so tricky is its game play and customisation. FM3 is all about strategy and it has you constantly weighing up your strengths/weaknesses. Battles last around 20 minutes and become progressively more complicated. Performance is rated with medals of bronze through to platinum.

Wanzers are fully customisable (legs, torso, arms - even paint jobs), parts can be changed and upgraded or have additional HP powerups added to them. You can custom build your Wanzar for outright brute strength, defense ability or travel distance etc. The trouble is you can't do them all - too heavy and you won't be able to carry additional supplies or ammo in your backpack; too light and you won't last long.

No money to upgrade? Capture or steal a Wanzar during battle. Get a Wanzar pilot to surrender and you get to keep their machine, cause an enemy pilot to eject then kill them before they can remount. An excellent body part to acquire is a Tiandong 3 arm as this comes with an ejection punch.

Alternatively you can use a risky but badass move of ejecting out of your dodgy Wanzar straight into an unmanned enemy one. Ejection may be your only option if your Wanzar is taking a flogging!

FM3 even has its own virtual internet where you can visit in-game web sites to conduct various activities from downloading different desktop wallpaper or sending and receiving mail, to selling or buying upgrades for your Wanzers, even hacking sites.

### CAMMO 3D

Solid textures are a little grainy and the Wanzers look small on the battle maps. However, when the camera zooms in to execute a combat move detail is much more impressive.

Watch as your Wanzar plants its feet to brace for the kick of a dirty great shotgun. There are other nice touches like dangling cables sparking when parts lose their HP and the hiss of hydraulic servos can be heard as they move.

Split screens will present if the situation necessitates, such as taking aim at an overhead chopper or up an embankment. Wanzers also do various slick animated moves to celebrate turning an enemy into scrap metal.

Even though FM3 is pretty engrossing, it is not for everyone. If you just want mindless violence stick to Quake or Armoured Core. This game can also bog down a bit when trying to find things on the in-game internet. Best option - just buy it. 'Cause with 150 hours + of game play, it'll cost more in rental to get through it!

Scott Riddiford

# Australian Station

GRAPHICS:	★★★	A bit grainy but you don't really notice
SOUND:	★★★	Good effects, dramatic tunes at the right moments
GAMEPLAY:	★★★★	Endless customisable options
DIFFICULTY:	★★★★	Try getting platinum medals every mission
LIFESPAN:	★★★★	Amazing - 150 hours on one CD

# 89

PERCENT



# TERRACON

An evil brain is stealing your genergy. Blast it!

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Sony
- Developer  
Picture House
- Genre  
3rd Person shooter
- Release Date  
August
- Expectations  
A groovy futuristic blast-em-up.

## ALTERNATIVES

- Syphon Filter 2
- Tomb Raider



This is your character in the game, a sort of bad-ass Roswell alien



These energy silos are hoarding "genergy"



You need genergy to fill in these things

**T**hose little gray-headed aliens with big heads and bulging eyes are everywhere. The X-Files, Perfect Dark, Communion, you can't turn around nowadays without tripping over yet another media product that features these freaky little aliens in them. So at first glance Terracon appears to be yet another hopeful on the cattle mutilation bandwagon.

On closer inspection it looks like Terracon has also decided to go with the recent trend towards third-person action/adventure games, a genre glutted with sequel factories like Tomb Raider and all those which followed it. It turns out that both these impressions are dead wrong. While it is indeed a third person shooter where the player controls one such "grey," it's such a refreshing break from the mold that the player can't help but forget themselves in the multilayered action and immense, picturesque levels.

### EVIL SPACE BRAIN ALERT !!!

The plot doesn't involve the colleagues of our hero cruising around in Alabama tormenting farmers, but is instead embroiled in their own internal affairs. A peace loving, yet lazy race, they have created Terracon, a vast intelligent factory ship to do their grunt work for them. This consists of terraforming hostile planets into beautiful landscapes suitable for colonisation.

But the giant, smoldering brain that controls Terracon didn't take too kindly to his workload, and has constructed an army of evil robots bent on destroying the galaxy, starting with the five worlds it cleaned up for its former masters. The game starts with your mentor being brutally murdered at the remote hands of Terracon, shortly before he splits a planet in two just for the opportunity to laugh in a deep, booming, synthetic voice.

### GENERGY?

Your quest then is to liberate the five planets from Terracon's oppression and destroy the evil brain once and for all. The secret to all of this is genergy, a form of energy that seems to define the economy in this part of the universe. It looks like a kind of red glowing plasma, and can be used to form any building or machine desired by being structured in a sort of force field lattice.

In order to further his military conquest, Terracon has shored up the local supplies of genergy on each of the planets you'll visit, and turning the tide means taking control of this genergy for yourself. You must destroy every enemy silo of it you come across, and use their contents to rebuild the facilities that existed before the invasion. With the planetary defence system of each planet in turn activated, Terracon can be driven from its surface, and ultimately isolated and destroyed.

### BLAST OR BE BLASTED

You make all this happen by charging across the surface of the planet, blowing up pretty much everything you come across. Destroyed robots and structures yield genergy, and there is also your health bar to worry about. The environments are large, free ranging collections of islands, with enough freedom of movement to convince the player they have full run of the planet.

In addition to the standard third person view you can also zoom through a telescopic sight to make precision shots at aerial targets, and also better judge yonder objects as to their role in your mission.

Movement is limited by the waterline, as your man doesn't seem to enjoy getting wet and is violently and damagingly spat out of the ocean whenever he falls in. You can view your character from three different distances, and you can also uplink to your dropship when you want a map of the surrounding area or a reminder of your objectives. Once you've completed a stage the dropship comes and picks you up, and from orbit you can choose which area of the surface to liberate next. This menu screen is a wonder to behold, as the spherical planet slowly rotates beneath your ship, and as you steer around in high orbit the stellar sphere of the night sky spins in step with your actions.

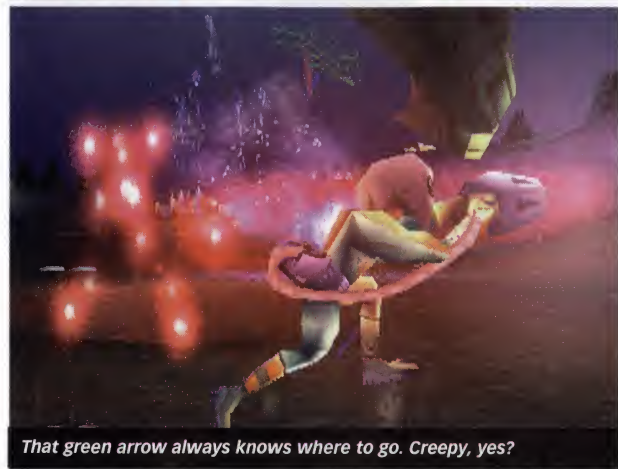




Kind of like that old TV show Time Tunnel.



Each of the planets you explore has a wide variety of terrain types



That green arrow always knows where to go. Creepy, yes?



Spot the War Of The Worlds reference, kids

### GAME FEATURES

- Memory Card
- 1 or 2 Players
- Dual Shock Compatible



#### GRAPHICS SO REAL YOU COULD TRIP OVER THEM

The graphics speak wonders at every stage. The landscapes of the planets you explore almost seem to be fractally generated, for there is no hint of repetition in the shorelines or geographical features you come across. The programmers obviously had fun making what is essentially a cartoon version of the British Isles, with Stonehenge-like obelisks standing around all over the place, ruined castles and other telltale signs of ancient civilisations capping hills and peppering fields.

The graphics engine that makes all this happen is very solid, and makes you wonder what most other PlayStation development teams do all day. The visuals are crisp and clear, and there are innumerable nice touches like the way images warp around when viewed through your sniper scope, or the matrices of wireframe graphics that explode when you liberate yet another energy-starved object.

As is the fashion these days the cut scenes are rendered in an analogue of the in-game engine, and the product is all the more seamless for it. Even the loading and options screens are spread across the side of your Flash Gordon-looking starship, a move that while unnecessary is kind of cool regardless.



#### TECHNO PRISONERS

The music that plays throughout is not unlike goa trance, and is a relaxing way to round out your planet exploring experience. The simple overland style of play owes much to early classics like Mercenary, Driller and even Sentinel. There are secret areas to be found and end-of-level statistics that can be poured over, but if you want a smooth ride through some really nice alien scenery then there's nothing stopping you.

Terracon is a pleasant surprise. Without fanfare or hype it's come out of nowhere to provide a balanced, stylish and accessible game experience. It's no blockbuster, but if you want some space adventure and you want it now, then this is a good place to start.

James Cottee

# Australian Station

■ GRAPHICS:	★★★★	Crisp, clean, effective and nice
■ SOUND:	★★★★	Relaxing music, funky alien voiceovers
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★★★	Fairly simplistic, but fine-tuned and robust
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★★	The action gets pretty frantic as you progress
■ LIFESPAN:	★★★	Even when conquered, it has a pick-up-and-play appeal

# 87

PERCENT



# DESTRUCTION DERBY RAW

Car racing as it should be

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Video Systems
- Developer  
Ubisoft
- Genre  
Racing
- Release Date  
August
- No. of CD's  
One
- Expectations  
Fast cars. Racing.  
Fast.



David Hasselhoff started his career as the Knightrider



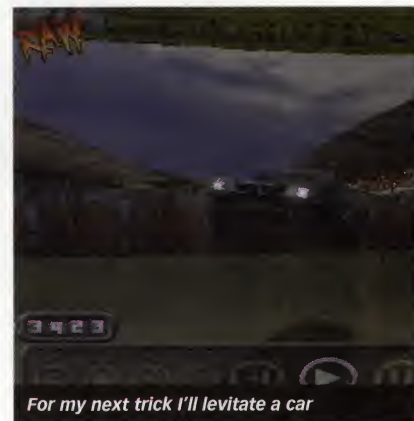
A deleted scene from Dukes of Hazzard

## ALTERNATIVES

- Vigilante 8 2nd  
Offence,
- Carmageddon



You need a red car, not helmet, to win



For my next trick I'll levitate a car

**R**acing games are all good and well, but for anything to really be fun, one has to add an element of violence. Enter **Destruction Derby Raw**, a car racing game that rewards violent collisions with other cars instead of penalizing them. This isn't the boring monotony of Formula One cars turning left four hundred times, this is car racing as it should be.

### RAM ME

There are a variety of different modes that one can choose to play. The three general types are Wreckin' Racin', Smash4\$ and Battle. Wreckin' Racin' is more of a straight-forward racing game than the other modes. Simply select a car and start racing. However, it's not simply a case of crossing the finish line first. Instead, points are awarded for driving ability as well as the destruction wrought upon opponents. To proceed to the next track you will have to equal or better a minimum amount of points for each track. Smash4\$ is similar to Wreckin' Racin', except that the points you make in a race are converted to money. With this money you can repair and upgrade your vehicle, or purchase a new one. Battle mode actually consists of four sub-games. Assault is basically racing and

inflicting as much damage as possible. Destruction Derby is a classic last-man-standing arena affair. Skyscraper is a very tense mode, similar to the Derby, but the action takes place on a skyscraper. Going over the edge is instant death, making for a short, tense game. Finally, Pass Da Bomb is once again similar to the arena-type games, with the addition of a bomb that appears on cars every few minutes. The only way to get rid of the bomb before it does catastrophic damage to your ride is by ramming another car.

### DESTRUCTION DERBY ROAR

The first thing you'll notice about Destruction Derby Raw is the roaring noise. From go to whoa the game hits you with roaring engines, raucous guitar riffs and jarring crashes. It's not the most subtle use of atmospheric sound that you'll ever see in a game, but it sets the scene perfectly for your rev-head shenanigans. Perhaps the only concern is with the music. It doesn't seem to vary enough, and can get a little repetitive and tiresome. It isn't that overt though, as the races don't last for all that long. As for the graphics, although they are a nothing revolutionary, they are neat, quite seamless and feature a nice degree of detail without ever

looking messy. At all times the game manages to avoid anything bland or ugly.

### ROUGH HANDLING

Each car is rated differently for handling characteristics such as top speed, acceleration, braking, damage capacity and so forth. In certain modes these cars can be modified and the characteristics changed. These modified cars can then be saved and loaded for use in other events. There are also several bonus cars to unlock. The actual gameplay itself is nothing too cerebral, but it is an absolute blast. The driving model seems geared more towards fun than realism, but this adds to the game rather than detracting from it. The way that your car bounces wildly after landing from a jump, or the crazy tilting as you plow around a corner sideways lends a feeling that your car is really interacting with the environment as opposed to simply driving around a track. The real fun of the game is in the violent collisions with other vehicles. Whenever you land a decent crash into another vehicle, the level of damage done will be announced by a message flashing up on the screen. For example, a "Teeth rattler" will indicate that you only tapped the guy, whereas a "Bone cruncher" means you hit him hard. It will





Check out that behind



"Yeah. I'm number one."



Time to call the insurance company



Would you rather race in a Porche or this?



also be reported if you manage to hit a car in such a way as to force it into a spin. Every car can only absorb a certain amount of damage before it is destroyed and unable to further compete in the current event. This damage capacity is spread out over the various aspects of the car, and if the internal section is annihilated the car is out of action.

#### NO NEED TO THINK

Destruction Derby Raw is a fairly straightforward game. It certainly doesn't boast a great deal of depth, and you can safely switch your brain off when playing. It isn't the sort of game that you will think about when not playing it, and it's unlikely that you would ever play it for hours on end. What it does offer is a quick fix of high-octane fun. Even if you lose the race or match you are involved in, chances are that you still had fun playing. The crunch produced by slamming into the side of a hapless vehicle at top speed is very satisfying. Sideswiping opponents over the edge in a Skyscraper match is also thrill. The only real complaint that I have is that the enemy AI doesn't seem to be aggressive enough. This doesn't mean that the game is not a challenge, but an extra edge could have been added to races if a few more pathological drivers were added to the game. Still, this is a minor complaint in the face of the



fun that the game delivers. It won't change your life, it won't keep you addicted for months on end, but it will give you a quick rush whenever you pick it up and play for an hour or two. Despite its lack of real innovation and depth, Destruction Derby Raw is one heck of a lot of fun. Racing enthusiasts and action fans alike should give it a try.

Rodney Gall

Australian  
Station

■ GRAPHICS:	★★★	Nice, uncluttered, neat
■ SOUND:	★★★	Thunderous roaring that really fits the bill, music may get repetitive
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★★★	Raw, straightforward fun
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★★	Easy to learn, easy to play, not so easy to win
■ LIFESPAN:	★★★	Lacks depth, fun enough so that you can get your fix any time

## GAME FEATURES

Memory Card

1 or 2 Players

Dual Shock Compatible

79  
PERCENT



# RONALDO V FOOTBALL

Can the world's best soccer player make this the best soccer game? No

## FACT FILE

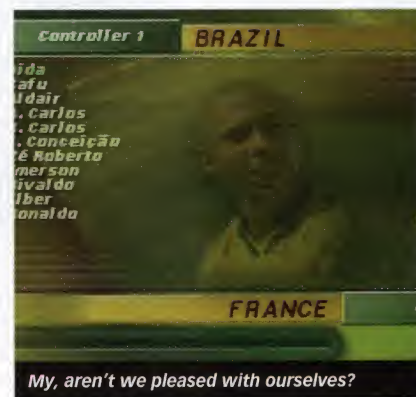
- Publisher  
Ozisoft
- Developer  
Infogrames
- Genre  
Soccer
- Release Date  
Available now
- Expectations  
A fast-paced arcade soccer fest



Nasty tricks, like cutting bits out of the ref's sleeves, are severely punished



Not that there's anything wrong with that...



My, aren't we pleased with ourselves?



They look like giant - nappies!

It's all getting a bit tedious, isn't it? The PlayStation has always been the console of choice if you enjoy having sub-standard driving games rammed down your throat, but now it seems that there are just as many crappy soccer games on the market as well.

While this might seem like a good thing for developers of Crappy Soccer Games, thinking that their average title will look like gold among the hordes of shoddy games, it's actually the opposite that happens. Unless the game is excellent (ie. ISS Evolution, FIFA 2000), then it is

instantly classified with the poor games.

Consider Ronaldo V-Football classified with the poor games. It's not that RVF totally stinks, but it still fails to get out of that bastard of a pit called "mediocrity". The graphics, they're alright, but they're far from FIFA 2000. The sound quality is alright, but for a game that tries to lean a little more towards arcade excitement, are quite sparse and the sound effects and commentary never really gets the adrenalin flowing.

### AMAZINGLY AVERAGE

The gameplay can be described in two words, one repeated over and over - very, very, very average. This is a shame, because as ISS Evolution has shown us, if you take a game that has an excellent gameplay engine and surround it with good (but not mind-blowing) graphics, you can still have an A+ title. The sluggish controls in RVF could be excused if the graphics were amazing. I'd be saying here something like "the game suffers from some slowdown, but the character models look phenomenal!". Instead, I have to tell you that the gameplay is slow and hence, not very fun.

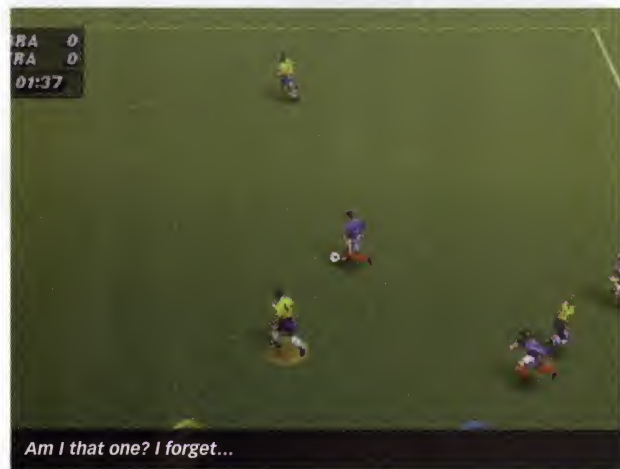
I mentioned two excellent soccer games at the beginning of this review, FIFA 2000 and ISS Evolution. It seems as though Infogrames have listened to the way the gaming community would drool over FIFA's presentation and ISS's

gameplay, and they've tried to combine the best of both worlds. As usually happens when developers try to give us "the best of everything", we end up getting a product not as good as the ones being imitated. Here, we get what's meant to be a very fast-paced game, but is in fact quite slow, with the players feeling like they're running in mud.

The slow-paced nature of the game, and slightly sluggish controls are the two main flaws in RVF, but unfortunately they're the two worst things that you can combine in a sports game. When you press a button, it seems like your player has to think for a second before he executes the move. Even when you're just running around, the players feel like they've got those weighted shoes on to increase their calf muscles. Changing direction can be a bit of a chore, and another dodgy aspect to the game is that the ball control of your player isn't that great. It's far too easy to lose control of the ball (probably to promote end-to-end play), but it's more frustrating than exciting.

Another criticism of RVF is that there aren't enough special moves to perform in the game. All the basics are there, like standard ground kicks, crosses and through-kicks, but when you have the ball it's basically running or not. Also, the crosses are a little hard to control, which is especially hard to come to grips with after playing ISS for hours on end.





**GAME FEATURES**

- Memory Card
- Dual Shock Compatible

**GRAPHICALLY, A MIXED BAG**  
Now that the ISS gameplay comparison is gone, it's onto the graphics. The one thing about RVF that is done very well is the stadiums. They all look quite imposing, and even though they're not modelled on any real-life stadiums they're still a joy to look at. It's the players that are the main problem. They sorta look like the FIFA players, but not really. Imagine looking at the FIFA players after they've gone for a swim and rolled around in the sand for a while - that's right kids, they're very grainy.  
Along with the stadiums, there's another nice graphical touch - flares on the ground! No, they're not being tossed onto the playing field

by soccer hooligans, they're the kind that rest peacefully on the side of the pitch, making the field look like something out of a bad science-fiction movie. It looks very cool.  
Time to bring up another annoying problem in the game, and that's the commentary. There's not enough of it! Or maybe it's just forgettable. The truth is that both of those statements are correct. The only time the commentators really get into the game is after you've scored a goal, and you're already excited by then anyway. They're meant to get you into the game, wanting to perform some awesome moves to hear them going crazy in the commentary box. Instead, it's almost like

they know someone's going to score sooner or later so they're holding off until then.  
It's hard to recommend Ronaldo V-Football to soccer fans, because they are really going to be put off by the game's attempt to be a true arcade scoring-fest. It's also hard to recommend this title to general sports fans, because although the game is aimed at you guys, ISS Evolution is already out and it's a far better title. At the end of the day the "Ronaldo" name will be selling this title, and even if you're a mad fan of that ugly Brazilin, make sure you know that you're going to be getting a game that's fun, yet fatally flawed.

Wesley Willis

# Australian Station

■ GRAPHICS:	★★★	Comes off like a second-rate FIFA clone
■ SOUND:	★★	Very sparse sound effects and the commentary is boring
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★★	Needs to be much tighter
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★★	Challenging enough, but not hard enough for real soccer fans
■ LIFESPAN:	★★	Won't hold your interest for long

**64**  
PERCENT



# NBA SHOWTIME: NBA ON NBC

You've played this game before

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Playcorp
- Developer  
Midway
- Genre  
Basketball
- Release Date  
Available Now
- Expectations  
NBA Jam. Yes, that is all we expect - NBA Jam, nothing more.

## GAME FEATURES

- Memory Card
- Multi Tap Adaptable  
1-8 Players
- 1 to 8  
Players

## ALTERNATIVES

- NBA Hangtime
- NBA 2000



"He's on fire!" "Boomshakalaka!" "Serves up the FACIAL!" "He's on fire!" "Boomshakalaka!" "Serves up the FACIAL!" "He's on fire!" "Boomshakalaka!" "Serves up the FACIAL!" "He's on fire!" "Boomshakalaka!" "Serves up the FACIAL!"

Sorry about that, but after playing NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC for the past few hours, those were the only statements I could hear, say or type. Not to say that the sound effects in the game are repetitive or anything (note sarcasm).

Before I get into the body of this NBA Showtime, you should probably know that this game has been reviewed many times before. It went under the name of NBA Jam, and you most probably played it at your local arcade, on maybe on a MegaDrive, SNES or PC. Showtime is identical to NBA Jam in almost every way except for two differences which hinder, rather than help the series.

### HAMSTRUNG

First of all, the graphics. Yes, they're now in 3D, but on the aging PlayStation they've come out totally grainy, washed out and it makes playing the game a hard task. You can't even tell the difference between players like Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant - and when one of those guys is 7'2" and the other is 6'6", that's

shocking.

Also, the animations of the players have taken a battering to keep the frame-rate flowing smoothly (and to be fair, the frame-rate is quite good). For instance, when you go up for one of those massive 20-foot-in-the-air dunks, you'll find that the player will complete the dunk in what seems like only three frames of animation. So attempting to block a dunk is impossible, because your timing will be totally off. The sound effect of the dunk will occasionally come before the ball is through the hoop as well. Not good.

The other difference in NBA Showtime is the addition of fouls. Why Midway thought to add this feature to the series is beyond me. All it does is slow down the game with boring free-throws and it takes away the incentive of hammering your opponent.

### NOW THAT WE'RE DONE BITCHING...

NBA Showtime still has a lot of fun packed in it, especially in multiplayer mode. Playing it alone won't give you much satisfaction, especially with the awful CPU catch-up mode on. There seems to be a rule in NBA Showtime that no team will win a game by more than 10 points. No matter how much you're kicking ass, the CPU will come back and score 10 points in a



row to make the game close in the last few seconds. And if you suck, the CPU will acquire Down's Syndrome in the last minute to help you almost win the game. Playing Showtime with a bunch of friends alleviates this problem though.

NBA Showtime could possibly be the first game ever that has worse visuals than a similar game on the previous generation gaming systems. But it's the gameplay that counts, right guys? Whatever. Even die-hard fans of NBA Jam should rent this one first. However, if you've got three friends and need another multiplayer title, Showtime is the goods.

Wesley Willis

Australian  
**Station**

■ GRAPHICS:	★★	Grainy. Very grainy
■ SOUND:	★★★	"He's on fire!" Get used to that quote
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★★★	Fun as hell, but still just NBA Jam in 3D
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★★★★	Can you say "cheating"?
■ LIFESPAN:	★★	You'll never stop playing this game (if you have friends, that is)

**72**  
PERCENT



# BISHI-BASHI SPECIAL

It's Japanese for BUTTON MASHING!

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Ozisoft
- Developer  
Konami
- Genre  
Party Game
- Release Date  
Out Now
- Expectations  
Almost 100 crazy games in one!

## GAME FEATURES

- Memory Card
- Dual Shock Compatible
- 1 to 8 Players

## ALTERNATIVES

- Worms  
Armageddon
- Arcade Party Pak



"I love you. No, really. I do."

Like the greatest games of all time, the Tetris and Space Invaders of the modern age, Bishi-Bashi Special relies on gameplay to carry the day; gameplay which grabs you by the hind-brain and won't let go.. When the PlayStation fires up Bishi-Bashi, players are confronted by a baffling cultural experience; a menu system that is laid out to accommodate as many different colours as possible.

The mini games that make up Bishi Bashi are all akin to each other in that they require the mashing of the buttons in a more or less systematic way to produce results which outdo that of your human or CPU opponents. The best of these are Robot-Docking, Ladder-Climber, Death Conveyor-Belt and Plant Grower. All the games start with a little demonstration of how



Girl Power will beat the guy with the knob



Strange idea - a race to the toilet

they are played, with jarring music blaring in the background, and the control keys being demonstrated.

Robot-Docking is one example of the instructions that are relatively clear. The players both control space ships that correspond to colours on the joypad. These can be pressed to dock the ships with each other. When all three are docked, they become a giant robot, there is a crash of thunder, a flash of lightening, and the screen clears to show the three ships flying along once more. The idea is to create as many Giant Robots as possible, which, going by Japanese cartoons and videogames more robots is always a good thing.

Ladder-Climber is a race between the two players to guide their straining characters to the top of a building. When the victor reaches the top of the building, he enters a golden toilet seat atop it, there is a flushing noise, accompanied by a sigh of relief, and the computer announces the winner.

Death Conveyor-Belt does not require any of the finesse and precision of Robot-Docking, or even the strategic planning of Ladder-Climber, but it is still a favourite for its conceptual genius. As a mad-man with a monocle operates a conveyor belt feeding into a mincer, both players must furiously mash both direction



Red ones always go faster



The "Flower Simulator 2000" is amazing

arrows and fire-keys in a circular pattern to make their characters run faster. The last person to fall off is the winner.

This reviewer's choice for Bishi-Bashi mini-game of the millennium must go to Plant Grower. The instructions are simple and elegantly displayed; "Just BASH The Buttons." Both Players control a plant which grows only at the rate the buttons are pressed. The first to grow a plant wins.

After years of playing games that require the IQ of a rocket-scientist, the reflexes of a fencer and the strategic vision of a Five Star General, it is a relief to play a game that just tells you to bash the buttons. Most of the 100-odd games in Bishi-Bashi are like that, and they are all simple, easy to play and lots of fun.

While it is not a serious game in it's own right, and won't be played for hours on end, it is still a welcome diversion from the world of serious anti-social games that soak up time and energy. Lord knows, play enough Final Fantasy, and you won't know three other people to play games with. Bishi-Bashi is a welcome opportunity to bring something of the sociability of the arcade game back home to the console

Jack Elliott

Australian  
Station

■ GRAPHICS:	★★	Primitive would be a generous term
■ SOUND:	★★	Odd bouncy music, grating repetitive action noises
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★★★	A brilliant anti-dote to normal games
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★★★	Sometimes hard going, but this is irrelevant with friends.
■ LIFESPAN:	★★★★	This game will lurk on your shelf with frivolous portent

76  
PERCENT



# STRIDER 2

Old school action meets 32-bit graphics - A Capcom classic returns!

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Ozisoft
- Developer  
Capcom
- Genre  
Action/Platform
- Release Date  
Out Now
- Expectations  
One of the most stylish platformers is back!

## GAME FEATURES

- Memory Card
- Dual Shock Compatible
- Single Player

## ALTERNATIVES

- Tombi 2 (Whoopee Camp)
- Klonoa of the Wind (Namco)



I've been a valiant knight in shining armour, casting spells and fighting with all my might to free princess from the clutches of headless goblins and winged devils. I've braved many a dark city street, fighting hand-to-hand with heartless thugs who'd kidnap a friend's daughter. I've let rage flow like fire through my fingertips as I decimated my opponent with a dragon's fury. I am a worshiper of the House of Capcom, and proud of it.

Strider 2 marks the return of one of Capcom's greatest 16-bit heroes, Strider Hiryu. Originally a 2D side-scrolling platformer, Capcom have done little to change the equation save

adding a third dimension to the backgrounds. The core gameplay still involves running from left to right, dispatching enemy soldiers, robots and the like with the swing of your powerful sword. There are a number of predictable power-ups that give a nastier edge to your blade, which supplements your special abilities like sliding and being able to climb up impossible surfaces.

From the outset, it should be said that Strider 2 is only going to be appreciated by those who were around to play the original in the arcades or on the Megadrive. Anyone else - including those who are looking for the novelty connection to Marvel Vs Capcom - will probably be disappointed by the shallowness and low difficulty level of the game. And it's true. By today's standards, it doesn't stack up.

However, the appeal of Strider is a lot different to what people look for in games for this current generation of games. These days, people want instant gratification. They want shock value, spectacular graphics, and enough of a promise of depth to keep them going in the long term, all in the first 25 minutes.

The thing is, 25 minutes is all you need to finish Strider 2. The people who will truly love this game are the ones who finish the game over and over again, trying to get the best time and



trying to get through without being hit once for the highest rating. That, at least, was the essence of great gaming back in the 1980s.

To that end, Strider 2 does not disappoint. The game features five glorious levels antiquated German castles, snowcapped Russian mountains, futuristic military bases, giant airships, and deep space installations. Fans will also recognise several scenarios that pay homage to the original, such as running down the steep slope of a mountain, the jumping from one military skiff to the next, or the warped gravity core in the airship. The 3D elements have minimal intrusion on the gameplay. It's mostly done quite tastefully, and is used to supplement the core 2D action action. For instance, soldiers in the background typically take pot-shots at you while you're trying to take down a boss character.

In spite of the old-school excellence that Strider 2 achieves, it's still something of a disappointment that Capcom didn't do more with the idea. The one example that continues to shine is Konami's Castlevania: Symphony of the Night, the 32-bit transition of which is still unequalled by any other 8 or 16-bit franchise. Nevertheless, if you're at all a fan of Capcom, Strider 2 is an essential purchase.

Kevin Cheung

Australian  
**Station**

■ GRAPHICS:	★★★★	Stylish character art and design from Capcom
■ SOUND:	★★★	Music remixed from the original game. Sound effects standard.
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★	Excellent replay value, if only for gawking at the scenery
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★	Like I said, play through in 25 minutes
■ LIFESPAN:	★★	A game this short won't keep you occupied for long

**80**  
PERCENT



# TOMBI 2

Worried about Tabby? Jump in the water!

## FACT FILE

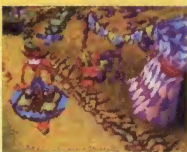
- Publisher  
Sony
- Developer  
Whoopee Camp
- Genre  
Action/RPG
- Release Date  
TBA
- Expectations  
Worhy sequel to  
tombi 1

## GAME FEATURES

- Memory Card
- Dual Shock Compatible
- 1 or 2 Players

## ALTERNATIVES

- Crash Bandicoot 3
- Alundra 2



This RPG/Platformer hybrid is charming, cute, and (as the game goes on) reasonably challenging. The dialogue shows strong signs of having been translated from the Japanese, and the voice acting of having been done by people with so little talent they couldn't even get work doing commercials. There is also something a bit disturbingly trippy about playing a pink-haired ape-boy, who has a pet mosquito to do all of his talking for him. But don't let that put you off: if you like platformers, this one really has everything. The puzzles are interesting enough to get your attention, but easy enough that they don't interfere with the flow of the game. The graphics are pretty, clear and easy to understand what's going on at all times, and frequently humorous in a cute kind of way. And the gameplay is smooth, fun, quick-paced and exciting.

### WASH THE STRANGE LUMP!

The RPG elements of the game are, as you might expect, pretty simplified. You wander around talking to anyone who will listen to you, and they send you on various little mini-quests, the fulfillment of which will help you to carry out

the big quest, the plot of which I won't handle here for fear that it will fall apart. (Suffice it to say it's very, very flimsy. Actually, the sub-heading of this review pretty much tells all there is to tell.) From time to time you collect a special item (Bird Clothes! Fast Pants!) which will make the action sequences easier/possible. In short, there are some RPG elements in this platform game, which add to the fun; but for the serious RPG'er, there's more depth in a contact lens.

### DESTROY THE EVIL CAPPERS!

(No, not Warwick and Joanne) As for the action part of the game, all's well. The play is smooth and entertaining. Killing enemies is achieved by hitting them with your yo-yo, boomerang, or whatever, and then jumping on the stunned foe, leaping in the air, and hurling their body away. If you're cunning, you can hit another enemy with the body, saving yourself trouble and scoring bonus points. The jumping sequences are sometimes tough, but by and large fair, and not nearly as frustrating as in many other games of this genre.

Also, there are some neat little features that really add to the game experience. Throughout every level are treasure chests in red, blue, and



green. In order to open these chests, you need a key of the appropriate colour, which you only acquire later in the game. The result is, the whole map of areas that you've visited is not only available to re-visit, but you have a real incentive to do so, instead of just ploughing ahead through to the end. The existence of a wide range of "secret bonuses" and non-essential quests gives the feeling of a world rich with possibilities for exploration.

In short, Tombi 2 is a lovely game full of fun and excitement. The pseudo 3D it uses is actually much better, for most purposes, than the real thing. Platform fans will be happy.

Gus Hungerford

Australian  
Station

■ GRAPHICS:	★★★	Colorful, cute, and easy to understand
■ SOUND:	★★	Irritating bleeping, appalling voice acting
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★★	Smooth, fast paced, and enjoyable
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★★	Some of the action sequences can be a bit tricky
■ LIFESPAN:	★★★	It's a big quest, but there's nothing to pull you back a second time

78  
PERCENT



# HOGS OF WAR

The first pun is the deepest...

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Infogrames
- Developer  
Infogrames
- Genre  
Turn Based  
Strategy/Ballistics
- Release Date  
Out Now
- Expectations  
Fans of Worms will  
like this even better

## GAME FEATURES

- Memory Card
- Dual Shock Compatible
- 1 to 4 Players

## ALTERNATIVES

- Worms



Explosive flatulence is a problem that affects the entire community

The bad news first: there are some really awful puns in this game. The whole "pigs at war" theme is overblown and silly. The good news? If you like Worms (and who doesn't?) then this game should rock your world. It uses a very similar concept, but it does it full, realistic 3-D, in a way that is both novel, and highly playable. If your gaming experience with Worms is starting to wear a bit thin, because you find that the same strategies always work the best, then this game is the answer to your prayers. Simple enough that you needn't spend more than a few minutes with the manual, but deep enough that you'll be playing your friends for months to come. And the best news of all is, the single player game (unlike that in worms) is interesting and challenging and has an excellent level-progression system.

### YOU'VE MADE A PIG MISTAKE

Sorry, that heading doesn't really mean anything, but it gives you some idea as to the kind of jokes you'll repeatedly run across while playing this game. If puns like that make you want to crawl into the corner and howl in agony, maybe this game is not for you. Which is a pity, because it should appeal to just about everyone else. The wonderful Rik Mayall has done all the



"Hmmm, this map could be useful"

voice acting for this game, and I'm certain has written some of the dialogue himself. Yes, Rick from "The Young Ones" and "Bottom" will be there to congratulate you in your hour of victory! (And mercilessly taunt you in your time of defeat, naturally). For this alone the game is worth playing; "Hogs of War" is virtually unique in being a game where the voice acting, far from being embarrassingly bad, is genuinely funny, and you won't want to turn the voices off until you've heard all the one-liners at least two or three times.

### ALL BY MYSELF...

In the single player mode, you play against the computer in wide variety of well designed



What happens when you mix brine & swine



"Think you can outsmart a bullet? Huh?"

environments. For each level you get one "promotion point" for winning the stage and one bonus point if you manage to get all your pigs out alive. These points can then be spent advancing your rookie pigs through one of four different career branches: heavy weapons, engineer, espionage, and medic. Unlike in worms, where your whole arsenal is available to each worm, each pig has his own set of individual equipment. And as you promote him, his equipment gets incrementally more fearsome. Just as in worms, there are health and weapon bonuses littered around to be picked up, and mines to be avoided. A new innovation is the presence, occasionally, of bomb shelters you can hide in. But the real innovation of this game lies in the 3D world it takes place in - this is not just a graphical gimmick; the gameplay is immeasurably deeper and more interesting because of it. In short, this is no cheap rip-off; it goes where no other game has gone before, and will give Worms fans their best multiplayer gaming experience yet on PlayStation.

Gus Hungerford



Australian  
Station

■ GRAPHICS:	★★★	Clear, direct graphics, with some cute animation
■ SOUND:	★★★★	How many games have a comedy legend doing the voices?
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★★★★	Fun, simple to understand, yet with real strategic depth
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★★	Weapons take some mastering, you'll struggle for the survival bonus
■ LIFESPAN:	★★★★★	The promotion system, lengthy single player mode, and great multiplayer clinch it

95  
PERCENT



# MOHO

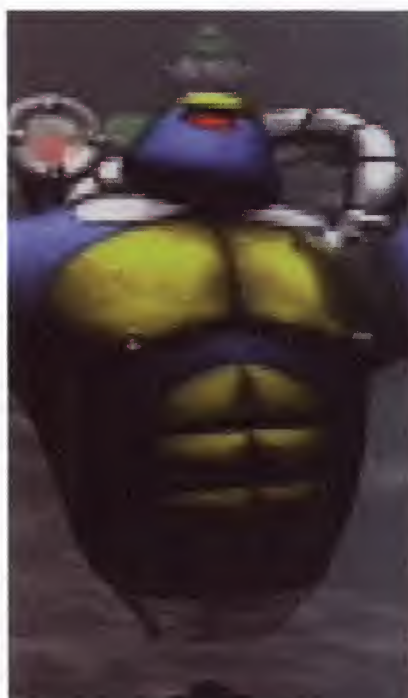
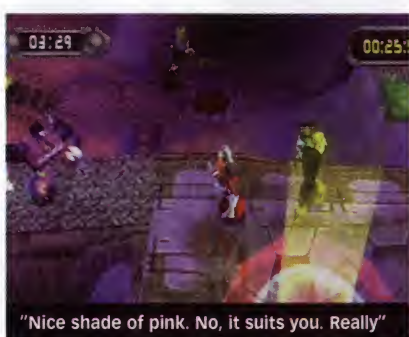
When you're on a roll, stick to it

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Jack of all Games
- Developer  
Lost Toys
- Genre  
Arena Combat
- Release Date  
August
- Expectations  
Genre-spanning arena combat and cutting-edge graphics? Yes please!

## GAME FEATURES

- 1 or 2 Players
- Memory Card
- Dual Shock Compatible



**G**ladiatorial Combat. Are there two words more beautiful to the human soul? Moho is set on the prison planet of Alpha Prime, where "synthetic lifeforms" do deadly battle for the amusement of the human population of the galaxy. The gimmick here is that these criminal robots have had their lower bodies amputated, and replaced by large steel balls which their torsos float over by means of some unseen force.

This creates a certain amount of novelty in the way the game characters move, as their motion is dictated by the momentum of the wrecking balls they ride around the landscape. One becomes very aware of the hills and troughs surrounding the character being played, as they directly affect momentum and direction.

### FUTURE TECH

The most striking feature from a visual standpoint in Moho is the fact that every combat arena implements fully deformable terrain. This means that damage from weapons or explosions, or indeed the weight of the prisoners' balls can warp the ground beneath them. The developers claim that this is the first time this graphical technique has been implemented in a game on any platform, and the effect is quite striking the first time you see it. A massive explosion can send huge concentric ripples through the ground like those left by a stone thrown in water, only these move slower, as though the play area is a vast pool of molasses.

The other unique quality of Moho is the that there isn't just one mode of play but several different types to cater to differing tastes. One or two players can race around circuits, play Tony Hawk like levels where ramps and bowls

must be mastered to yield every token in a given time, vie to be King Of The Hill for the longest, or just slug it out with the objective to be the Last Man Rolling.

### WHAT'S IN A NAME

Although the title may suggest to some that the object of the game is to strive for mo' hos, it's actually short for a geological term. The Mohorovicic Discontinuity is the boundary between the mantle and the Earth's crust, a factoid sure to get a chuckle or two out of all the geology buffs out there. In America Moho is being released as "Ball Breakers," a naming schism that gives credence to the notion that marketing types are utterly mad.

There's some solid British programming evident here, and futuristic stylings and electronic music give the impression that Moho wouldn't look out of place in a Judge Dredd comic book. If there's anything that works against the overall slickness of this package it's the fact that in order to be adaptable to the various types of sub-games the overall play mechanics had to be made fairly simplistic. Still, Moho fills a market niche that hasn't really been explored until now, and even if you can't get into the groove of this game you should still be bowled over by the graphics.

James Cottee



Australian  
**Station**

■ GRAPHICS:	★★★★	Very nice use of textures and deformable terrain
■ SOUND:	★★★	Fairly basic techno, but atmospheric enough
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★★	Quite simple. Old school. Almost retro
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★★★	Once gameplay is mastered strategy becomes essential
■ LIFESPAN:	★★★★	Huge single player campaign, plus stacks of multiplayer

**85**  
PERCENT



# DRAGON VALOUR

Time for some good old fashion dragon killing!

## FACT FILE

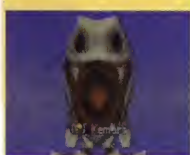
- Publisher  
Sony
- Developer  
Namco
- Genre  
RPG
- Release Date  
Out Now
- Expectations  
Could this finally be a Zelda for the PlayStation?

## GAME FEATURES

- Memory Card
- Dual Shock Compatible
- 1 or 2 Players

## ALTERNATIVES

- Legend of Legaia



Beware of the dragon's fart-lighting trick



"With my magic sword and hammer..."

**D**ragon Valor is Namco's new adventure game that combines action-style RPG and a side scrolling platform game. Sure, it kinda works, but if they ever decide to do Dragon Valour 2 there's a hell of a lot of room for improvement.

The opening movie is cool. Namco apparently photographed actual models of dragons and combined these with CG-created backgrounds to create the animation. However, the graphics in the game is not the same. The colours, background and animation are good but quite typical of games in this genre.

The story starts when Clovis finds that his

sister Elena has been killed by a dragon. He takes the Dragon Valour's magical sword and seeks out the dragon to avenge her death, thus becoming a "Dragon Valour" himself. The first chapter begins in Brize Forest where the basic fighting moves are explained. At the end you come face to face with your first dragon to whet your fighting appetite for the tougher battles to come.

### LATER...

Five years after you defeat the first dragon you will be in the empire of Raxis which has been overtaken by the Azale Knights. The gameplay is typical of an adventure RPG. You view a map between stages to follow and it's very limiting. Rather than have choices in where to go you are basically led by the nose. Once you make a choice you can't really go back. It's a very linear means of progression.

You have the usual traders' houses where you can trade the goods you find along the way for money. You can also collect coins throughout the game and use these to purchase magic powers and healing potions. These things can also be found scattered along the way in wooden crates and can also appear when you beat a certain creature such as an orc or a knight guard. Too much of the game



This is a grey-t game



"Leaping lizards. You scared me."

lacks originality. Why can't the hero gamble all his possessions to win something worthwhile for once?

### VIRTUAL GENEALOGY

The game starts out slow and it takes a while before it becomes interesting enough to keep you playing. The thing that may keep players interested is that there is an "Heir Lineage" system. At the end of the first chapter, Clovis marries either Princess Celia or Carolina. Who he chooses determines who their child becomes and hence determines who the next Dragon Valour will be in the following chapter. So each chapter sees you playing a different character. The only drawback of this is that strength needs to be built up again. The choice in marriage not only determines who the next Dragon Valour will be but also the way the next chapter will look. The choices made will actually change the path of the game.

The game improves as you progress but there really isn't much more that would keep you playing it. Everything is pretty much standard. Even the sound is nothing spectacular though it does make you feel like you're back in those olden days of magical creatures and dragons.

Mimmette Roldan

Australian  
**Station**

■ GRAPHICS:	★★★	Colourful and pretty enough.
■ SOUND:	★★★	Adds to the atmosphere.
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★★	The mix of platform and RPG gameplay could have been better
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★	Not enough challenges here for the serious RPG gamers.
■ LIFESPAN:	★★	Dependent on if you want to see who the final dragon valor is

**64**  
PERCENT



# WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER

Finally, a game with some real balls.

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Ozisoft
- Developer  
Codemasters
- Genre  
Snooker
- Release Date  
Out Now
- Expectations  
A slow pace boring sim

## GAME FEATURES

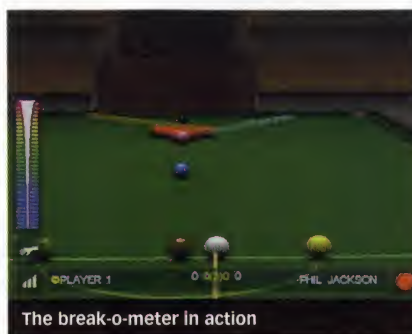
- 1 or 2 Players
- Standard Controller

## ALTERNATIVES

- Virtual Pool



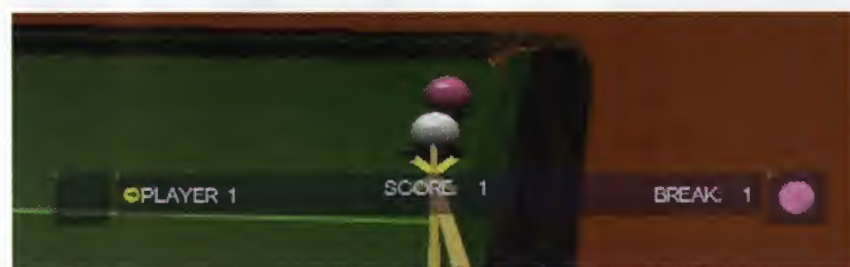
Balls. In every colour of the rainbow



The break-o-meter in action



"I say, some more brandy, if you please!"



Admit it, you looked at the title of this game and thought "next page!" Well, if you did that, besides not being able to read this brilliant review, you're missing out on a brilliant game. Yes, I have to admit that when LL Cool James handed me World Championship Snooker to review, I was far from excited. But once I started actually playing the damn thing, I became unnaturally excited (the less said about that episode the better).

Although focussing on physics can be as boring as hell, it has to be mentioned first when talking about WCS because the realistic physics are what make this game a joy to play. In some games, making the physics too realistic can make the game less enjoyable (like TOCA, for example), but in

WCS it works perfectly. Inaccurate physics in a snooker game would be like playing a soccer game in an anti-gravity chamber - impossible to play.

### SPOT ON

The aiming system in WCS is the other main factor in making this title a blast to play. When you're aiming for a ball, you'll see two arrows, one showing where the ball you want to hit will go (preferably in the pocket), the other showing where the white ball will end up. This sounds too simple and easy, but the main aim of snooker is figuring out how hard to hit the ball so that it ends up in an advantageous position for your next shot.

WCS also has all the little features that game reviews and fans of snooker will pick

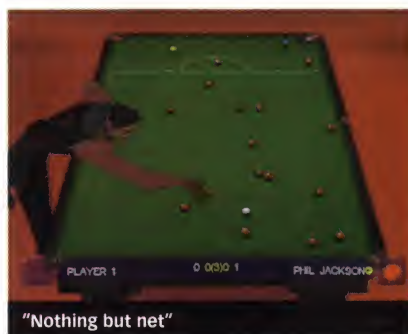
up. For example, when you start a championship the first time, you're only playing in a dingy old drawing room. You have to reposition the coloured balls yourself, and there's no spectators. But as you progress through, the playing arenas get bigger and the crowds get louder. The AI of the computer characters also improves a hell of a lot, and if you make a mistake in the later rounds you'll find you're doing a lot of watching and not much playing.

### POT BLACK

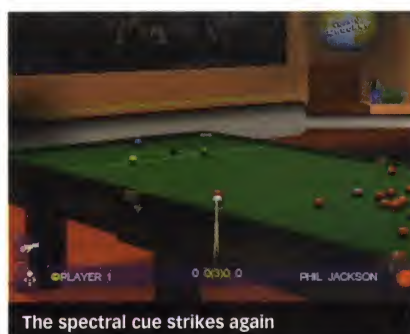
With the lack of "action" on screen, it's been surprising that most snooker games haven't looked that great. WCS changes that trend, with the table and balls being almost photo-realistic. The characters look a little Resident Evil (zombified), but they're not too bad, especially considering you don't see them that much.

World Championship Snooker is one of those awesome games that comes out of nowhere to bite you on the ass. It mightn't be everyone's cup of tea, and a good two night rental might see you sick of it, but I'll be damned if it's not a hell of a lot of fun.

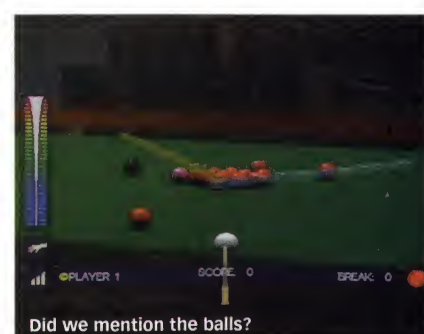
Wesley Willis



"Nothing but net"



The spectral cue strikes again



Did we mention the balls?

Australian  
Station

- GRAPHICS: ★★★★★ Surprisingly good!
- SOUND: ★★★ There's not much of it, but it's very authentic
- GAMEPLAY: ★★★★★ Easy enough to love, hard enough to get addicted
- DIFFICULTY: ★★★★★ But it's FUN
- LIFESPAN: ★★★★★ Strangely addictive

84  
PERCENT





**for gamers who have learnt  
to play nicely together**

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AUSTRALIA'S PC GAMES AND TECHNOLOGY MAGAZINE



# UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE SEASON 1999/2000

Yet another Soccer game that doesn't quite score.

FACT FILE

■ Publisher  
Ozisoft

■ Developer  
Eidos

■ Genre  
Soccer

■ Release Date  
Out now

■ Players  
One or two

■ Features  
Memory card,  
Multitap,  
Analogue Control



ISS Evolution and FIFA 2000 are the two soccer games that get most fans of the sport salivating. UEFA Champions League Season 1999 / 2000, which wins the award for Longest PlayStation Game Title, is a commendable effort from Eidos, but unfortunately it doesn't quite have the gloss

and glitz of EA Sports' package, or the in-depth gameplay of Konami's flagship franchise.

Perhaps the most enjoyable aspect of UEFA is the ability to play in every UEFA final from 1960s through to today. This feature is set up like a scenario mode and is very well done, with you taking control of one team and either having to hold onto a small lead or try and overcome a massive deficit. Quite a few sports games are starting to make this feature standard, as they should - it makes for a great "quick hit" of excitement without having to play through an entire season.

The commentary is also quite well done in UEFA, except for the fact that it does sound a little "acted". Clive Tyldesley and Kevin Keegan do have quite a bit of enthusiasm though, which is the main aspect to a realistic soccer commentary team. The authentic camera angles and presentation also add to the whole soccer



It looks like that star-jumping simulation feel - a great attempt at broadcast-style coverage.

On the whole though, UEFA doesn't have the same awesome gameplay as ISS, and it's nowhere near the slick graphical package of FIFA. It's tried to do a bit of both, but unfortunately it's come up short. The graphics aren't quite as good as FIFA and the rest of the game isn't ISS. It's a good third option, but nothing more.

Wesley Willis

Australian  
Station

■ OVERALL: While the best one yet, it's still far from perfect.

■ GRAPHICS:	★★★	Serviceable. Nothing too flash but far from crap
■ SOUND:	★★★	Very enthusiastic commentary, sounds a little too fake though
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★★	See graphics
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★★	See gameplay
■ LIFESPAN:	★★	More than enough teams and scenarios to play through



## GHOUL PANIC

Point Blank joins the ranks of the living dead

FACT FILE

■ Publisher  
Sony

■ Developer  
Namco

■ Genre  
Shooting

■ Release Date  
Out now

■ Players  
One or two

■ Features  
Memory card  
GunCon

Anyone who loved Point Blank and Point Blank 2 will appreciate this new shooting game from Namco. Ghoulish Panic is pretty much Point Blank. Only this time you have an overall theme for the game...the ghost and goblins kind.

There are the usual modes - Arcade, Adventure, Survival and Party mode. It is in the Party mode where Namco decided to put something new. First there's the Race Battle where each player takes turns taking on a challenge and the points they acquire are translated into the metres they travel on the race track. The player with the most points at the finishing line wins. The other new thing is the Panel Battle. This one is actually kinda fun. Players take turns picking a panel. Behind each panel is either a challenge or a surprise. If you win the challenge the panel turns to your colour. The surprise panels are, well, a surprise. Anything can happen here. The player



with the most panels in their colour wins the battle at the end.

Imagine the game play of Point Blank. Replace the targets with ghosts, bats and skeletons. Have the likes of Frankenstein and Dracula as the big bosses at the end of each challenge in the Arcade mode and what do you



have? It's basically Ghoulish Panic. Even the graphics and sounds are pretty much the same style. Oh, and if you're really observant, you just might spot a few of the sloppy spelling mistakes they made when they converted the game.

Mimmette Roldan

Australian  
Station

■ OVERALL: Nothing new for gun game fans. Goths only

■ GRAPHICS:	★★	Nothing technologically new here.
■ SOUND:	★★	Sounds like Point Blank and it's only different if you care to really listen.
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★★	Not that addictive but shooting games are always fun anyway.
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★★★	There's something for everyone here.
■ LIFESPAN:	★★★	You can add this game to your collection of shooting games for variety.





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04



# ARMORINES PROJECT S.W.A.R.M.

It's an ugly planet. It's a bug planet.

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Acclaim
- Developer  
Acclaim London
- Genre  
Shooter
- Release Date  
Out now
- Players  
One or two
- Features  
Memory card  
Dual Shock

Starship Troopers was one of the big surprises at the movies last year, as what appeared on the surface to be a mere run-of-the-mill blockbuster with a 90210 mentality and neo-nazi imagery was actually an ingeniously constructed spoof of war movies and the American mindset in general. With the absence of an officially licensed product on the scene, fans of the movie, myself included, looked to *Armorines* as a potential surrogate for the urge to shoot giant bugs into little bits.

The Nintendo 64 version came out several months ago, and our hopes were tempered by the news that this first version was uninspiring, unoriginal and largely unplayable. We assumed that Acclaim's London studio would have learnt from their mistakes, and produced a PlayStation version that would not only fix all these mistakes, but perhaps regale us with some gripping cut scenes, an orchestral score,



Heat it up -

and maybe some new weapons and levels. This proved to be wishful thinking.

The graphics are washed out to such an extent that it's difficult to judge what's going on. Completing each level is a matter of trial and error. The bugs you fight are, by and large, invisible until they're gnawing on your face. To top it off the basic presentation of menus and



Give me everthing you've got

the game interface are unpolished, and all in all *Armorines* looks like a product that has embraced bugs in entirely the wrong fashion. This is one game where the chances of finishing it are slim, and the chances of enjoying it are worse. If a real bug invasion was this boring, we'd be finished.

James Cottey

Australian  
**Station**

■ GRAPHICS:	★	Murky, dingy, lousy
■ SOUND:	★	Sparse, desolate, unappealing
■ GAMEPLAY:	★	Really, really, bad
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★	Largely stemming from the lack of visual information
■ LIFESPAN:	★★	Some two player activity may appeal

**42**  
PERCENT

# ECW Hardcore Revolution

About as Unrevolutionary as a game can get.

## FACT FILE

- Publisher  
Acclaim
- Developer  
Acclaim
- Genre  
Wrestling
- Release Date  
Out now
- Players  
One or two
- Features  
Memory card  
Standard Controller



"Wow, a real mullet. Can I touch it?"

**E**CW Hardcore Revolution is the latest in a massive string of wrestling games for the PlayStation. However, unlike many of the existing titles which involve stars from the popular WWF and WCW organisations, this title boasts combatants from the lesser-known ECW.

This wrestling game plays much like any other; in fact, it plays exactly like another wrestling game on the market, because it uses exactly the same engine. All the options, move lists, game modes, almost everything is identical to that game (and possibly others as well).

The gameplay doesn't feel much like a fighting game, mainly due to a poor blocking system, unresponsive controls, and useless moves. The wrestlers are all poorly modeled and clumsily animated. The action can occasionally become entertaining when the two characters become entangled in the ropes, leave the ring, or attack each other with chairs.

The graphics in this game are pretty awful, with blocky backgrounds and low polygon counts. The sounds are quite dreadful, even for a wrestling game. The commentators rarely speak up, and they start repeating their lines fairly quickly. The music is not even worth mentioning.



"A-HA! Now the mullet is mine!"

The game types on offer include exhibition match, career mode, and tournament. There is also a system for creating your own wrestler, complete with a costume as silly as you can make it. The game does also offer a quite surprising range of options, for choosing the type of arena, rules of the match, and even things like the colour of the canvas.

This boring title is exactly the same (literally) as WWF Attitude, just with different faces and names. If wrestling and the ECW catch your interest, this title is obviously for you. For everyone else, it is a waste of time and money.

Leon Tranter

Australian  
**Station**

■ GRAPHICS:	★★	Ranges from bland to awful
■ SOUND:	★★	Mute the TV, put on some music
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★	It's a wrestling game. You know the drill.
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★★	Button-mashing may cause RSI.
■ LIFESPAN:	★★★	Customisable, lots of options

**48**  
PERCENT



# PLAYER MANAGER 2000

Behold: The definitive soccer management sim

FACT FILE	
■ Publisher	Sony
■ Developer	3DO
■ Genre	Soccer Management Sim
■ Release Date	Out now
■ Players	1
■ Features	Memory card

I'm not quite sure why you're even reading this review. Do you know what type of game Player Manager 2000 is? Here's a hint - unless you're a soccer fan, it's bloody boring. No, it's not a fighting game, idiot. It's a soccer management sim, and of course that can only mean one thing - boredom.

Unless of course you're actually a fan of soccer. For you guys, Player Manager 2000 is going to be the answer to all your wet dreams. Every tiny little detail of soccer has been crammed into this game, and it's up to you to piece together a champion team from scratch. Or cheat and choose a good team and never lose a game without breaking a sweat.

There are four leagues to choose from in Player Manager 2000 (England, Scotland, Italy and Germany). Each country has around 50 - 40 different teams to choose from, so your favourite team is unlikely to have been left out.



Once you've selected your team, you'll find that PM2000 differs slightly from most management sims. Instead of concentrating on the finance / salary / contract issues that you usually have to deal with, PM2000 looks more at formations and player management (duh). This is a great way to go, as worrying about how much your stadium charges for a pint of lager is straight boring.



As mentioned in the first line of this review, most of you who would enjoy a game like Player Manager 2000 would have probably already purchased it. Hardcore soccer fans with mucho patience are going to be playing this one for months on end. Everyone else couldn't give a toss.

Wesley Willis

Australian  
Station

■ GRAPHICS:	★★	Not really relevant to a simulation like this
■ SOUND:	★	Again, it's not what you're playing it for
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★★	They don't get much better than this, apparently
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★★	It would depend largely on your "Soccer IQ"
■ LIFESPAN:	★★★★	If you're into it, then this is the best one out

61  
PERCENT

# WALT DISNEY WORLD: MAGICAL RACING QUEST

Now you too can go-kart race with Mickey, Minnie, Goofy, Droopy, Sleepy...

FACT FILE	
■ Publisher	Ozisoft
■ Developer	Eidos
■ Genre	Go-Kart Racing
■ Release Date	Out now
■ Players	One or two
■ Features	Memory card Dual Shock



The number of go-kart racing games on the PlayStation seems to grow by the day. So far the definitive one has been the superlative Crash Team Racing, and there have been others too with their own merits, like Speed Freaks and Muppet Race Mania. Aside from the ubiquitous presence

of the most entrenched children's characters on the planet, what can this new game possibly offer discerning parents across the land?

Well, it's easier than most for a start. One can't imagine grizzled post-pubescent gaming veterans flocking to a game designed to undercut the age group that enjoys the Muppets. That most every recognisable character from the "classic" era of Disney is present seems to be lauded as a game feature in and of itself. There are large arenas to play in, various racing modes, stages where you must exhaustively search obstacle courses for tokens, and everything else you could rattle off about a kart racer in one sentence.

But does the market really need this product? The Muppets racer is just as easy and looks much nicer. For players who know how to handle themselves, Crash Team Racing is the obvious choice. So it really comes down to



whether you have your heart set on a racing game with Donald Duck in it. If this trend continues we'll see mindless, cutesy racers built around The Wiggles, or even The Teletubbies. Actually, that sounds like a good idea. I could go some Tubby-Custard right now...

Eliza Turing

Australian  
Station

■ GRAPHICS:	★★	Not up to par with the latest generation of racers
■ SOUND:	★★	All the familiar voices of your Disney Favourites(tm)
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★	Nothing really stands out
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★	Designed for younger players
■ LIFESPAN:	★★★	There's a fair bit to unlock.

64  
PERCENT



# VAMPIRE HUNTER D

Angsty anime vampire antics!



## FACT FILE

■ Publisher  
Jack of All Games

■ Developer  
JVC/Capcom

■ Genre  
Vampire Action

■ Release Date  
Out now

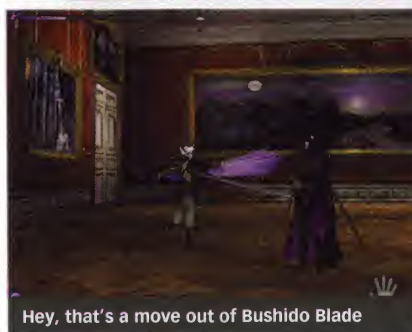
■ Players  
One

■ Features  
Memory card  
Dual Shock

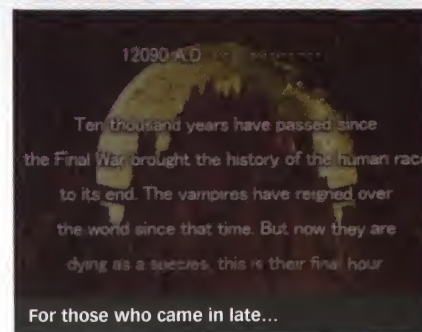
Take this game from JVC in conjunction with Capcom as an example of unoriginality in games. You have a drinker of souls similar to Shadowman, a disembodied left hand that helps you in a way remarkably close to what happens in Medieval 2 and you're hunting vampires - can anyone say "Soul Reaver" or any other recent vampire game?

Vampire Hunter D is based on the anime movie from way back in 1985 and the original novels of the same name. You take control of the half-vampire, half-human bounty hunter named D and come up against your age old protagonists, the Markus Brothers. Your specific mission in this game is to rescue a kidnapped girl from a particularly vicious vampire.

Controlling your character can be a bit fiddly, and it is especially frustrating because you are unable to use analogue mode. So,



instead of being able to fine tune your movements, you either get a full on run which means you keep missing your target, or an infinitely slow walk that takes a disproportionate amount of time to get to where you're going.



Being based on the classic anime means the storyline doesn't completely fall apart but due to the huge cavernous rooms and the very few numbers of beasts that inhabit them, the tale seems to get lost in the austerity of the environment.

Andrew Parsons

Australian  
Station

■ GRAPHICS:	★★★	Bad pixellation in some parts
■ SOUND:	★★	Really nothing to write home about.
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★	Room - fight a monster - hallway - fight a monster.
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★	Just remember to enter battle mode before fighting
■ LIFESPAN:	★	Another black coaster to add to the collection.

40  
PERCENT

# GRUDGE WARRIORS

Another stupid nightmare future

## FACT FILE

■ Publisher  
Jack of All Games

■ Developer  
Take Two

■ Genre  
3D

■ Release Date  
Out now

■ Players  
1

■ Features  
Memory card  
Shock Pad



Call me a cynic, but I just don't see the need for another 3D, over the shoulder, shoot-em-up game for the PlayStation. Grudge Warriors takes place in a future world where gangs vie for power by battling it out in armoured vehicles.

At the start of a game you select your team



and are then thrust into combat. Each team has a different tank with various primary and secondary weapons. Once you have made your selection, your vehicle is dropped on to the enemy's island and the melee begins. Essentially your aim is to complete a series of objectives, but this task is complicated slightly by the issue of the combat units of the enemy gang. The AI and offensive/defensive capabilities of the enemy units are fairly unremarkable, but they attack en masse, requiring you move fast and shoot faster. It rapidly becomes pretty standard fare, pummeling the enemy with cannon and rockets, recharging shields and ammo at conveniently placed recharge stations and shooting up the enemy some more. As you



wipe out foes and objectives you will gain access to new areas of the map allowing you to reach the final objectives to complete the level and move to the next island.

The sound and graphics are nothing special, but they get the job done. The gameplay is easy to pick up and provides a burst of short-term enjoyment, but I found myself rapidly losing interest after the initial few minutes of mayhem. The game itself just isn't compelling. Still, if you want a mindless shooter that provides a quick action fix, perhaps Grudge Warriors has something to offer you.

Rodney Gall

Australian  
Station

■ GRAPHICS:	★★	Functional, but nothing groundbreaking
■ SOUND:	★★	Again, they get the job done, but nothing amazing
■ GAMEPLAY:	★★	Quick action, but gets repetitive after little play
■ DIFFICULTY:	★★★	Weak enemy AI, but reams of enemies
■ LIFESPAN:	★★	Briefly enjoyable, very forgettable

55  
PERCENT



# RAYMAN

The perfect mix of style and substance

## FACT FILE

■ Publisher  
Ubi Soft

■ Developer  
Ubi Soft

■ Genre  
Platformer

■ Price  
\$34.95

■ Score

**95%**



Meet Rayman, the star of one of the biggest selling PlayStation games in the world



This scene is typical of the lush tropical environments you must explore

Rayman is a psychedelic swirling odyssey; a running, jumping, crouching punching multi-dimensional game that blends together an exotic mix of gameplay and background to create a truly unique experience. There is nothing quite like it; neither the dark techno-fantasy of *Abe's Odyssey*, nor the saccharine, bubble-gum world of *Mario* compares comes close to the lavish styling and detail of Rayman.

Not that this is entirely a bad thing. If there were too many games like Rayman we would all

go mad from their incessant strangeness. It is a well-known fact that after a few too many hours at the console, gamers dream of games. This is fine if it's too much Tetris (blocks just fall from the sky, after all - not too odd), or a little bit of *Final Fantasy VIII* (everyone likes to think they're a buffed up super-hero, after all), but imagine if you went to bed and dreamed about Rayman.

Rayman himself is rather odd; he has no arms and no legs, but he still has the full set of feet and hands. After a little too much magic potion from his friend the musician (a very



reliable connection), Rayman also uses his hair as a helicopter. Now go sleep on that!

If that is not odd enough, Rayman also inhabits a world of floating clouds, slippery music bars, multi-coloured swamps, bright jungles and floating budhas. As he progresses through these worlds, the gameplay changes accordingly. In the blue mountains, he must leap from cloud to cloud. In musicland, he has to glide down bars, dodge menacing music notes and leap over perilous gaps in the music. If seeing the music is always a bad sign, interacting with it cannot be healthy for you. Each level is a masterpiece: gloriously detailed and carefully put together, a triumph of style and substance working together to change the gameplay in tune to the backgrounds.

All of these worlds are merely a prelude to the main event - the face off with Mister Dark in Candy Castle. Why Mister Dark, an otherwise sinister and forbidding figure, would choose to live somewhere so innocuous sounding as a giant lolly store is odd, but Mister Dark himself is a bit of an eccentric, and not as strange as our hero, Rayman.

And if you thought Rayman was strange, well, Rayman's friends are even wilder. Each of them equipped with a funny hat of some kind, they help out Rayman in their own way. Take Betilla the fairy, wearing a pointy fairy hat all the rage on catwalks across the globe, who zaps him with her magic rays, giving him the power to punch or hang.

If I needed to be zapped, with, say, a microwave, every time I wanted to just hang around, then I would be very sickly in a week or so. Not Rayman. With a cheerful grin and a thumbs up to the player, he absorbs Betilla's rays and leaps off to meet his fate, newly equipped with the power to hang.

Then there is the Musician, who seems to have a big beret of some sort, which helps him brew the mystic brew that makes Rayman fly. Admittedly, Tarazan, another chum of Rayman, doesn't have a hat, but he is found in





## RAYMAN 2



Rayman was one of the first games released for the PlayStation, and it's a testament to its incredible quality that it's outshone most games that have come out since. Now, after years of waiting, the sequel to Rayman is just around the corner. Rayman 2 makes the leap to 3D, and what we've seen of it so far is nothing short of stunning. We'll have the full review next issue, but for now be well aware that there's no excuse not to own the first one!



about level six, lurking naked in some bushes with his clothes hanging in the branches above. Give Tarazan his clothes back (which he seemed perfectly happy without), and you score a magic seed.

Even the bad guys like Mister Stone have mysterious predilections in head gear. In the jungle, evil men whose heads are entirely covered in safari helmets chase Rayman through a land of swinging vines, giant eggplants and singing mushrooms. Hell, even the floating budhas have dinky little hats.

No-one, however, has a hat quite as dark and mysterious as Mister Dark. This character, quite the bad egg, is all hat and cloak. There doesn't seem to be anything else to Mister Dark except his hat, which just makes him all that much more threatening.

All of this, wonderfully presented and eminently playable as it may be, sounds like a

game for adults. If you dream the games you play, then it would be best to have a few years toughening up before you start seeing the singing mushrooms in your sleep. Nothing could be further from the truth. Rayman, like all platformers of the era, is made for kids, and they love it. The pretty graphics and the gradual learning curve make it a treat for the young 'uns; but the amazing gameplay and sheer diversity make it a hit with adults, too.

If you have Rayman at home, mouldering in a closet, get it out and dust it off; it is well worth revisiting. If you are new to the world of Rayman, go out and buy it at the low, low platinum price. There's also a pack available where you get Rayman, a memory card and an analogue controller for a mere \$49.95. Even if you don't love it at once, you can always find someone who can give it a good home.

Jack Elliott



Rayman 2 is making us Treble with anticipation





# FEEDBACK



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Blade Vs Buffy: Who would win?

Hi guys,

I love your mag. I have a few questions that I hope you can answer.

1. Will the version of Half-Life coming to the PS2 include the popular mod "CounterStrike"?

2. Will the new anti-piracy measures adopted by Sony affect all games?

3. What effect will the new measures have on the PSX community overall?

4. Are there any plans for another MediEvil game?

5. What the hell ever happened to the cover disc?

6. Are there any plans for more popular first person shooters to be converted to the PSX?

Thanks,

Mathias Pusch  
Berlin, Germany

Thanks for the letter, Mathias. Let's see if we can't help you out...

1. While Half Life is coming to the PlayStation 2, there is no indication as yet as to which if any mods will be available for it. The hard drive and modem add-ons for the PS2 will make downloading such mods possible, and make online gaming more accessible than ever before. As for Counterstrike, I personally hope they make the ballistics more accurate before any such inclusion.

2. They only effect some new games which have special means of detecting whether a PlayStation has been "mod-chipped." This code can't be retro-fitted to the hundreds of PSX games already released.

3. Aside from the fact many make this alteration so they can buy and play import games as soon as they're released, this technique will do little to discourage piracy, as pirates never buy black-disc games in the first place. Next they'll be saying you can ban crime by banning guns.

4. I believe one is in the early stages of pre-production for the PlayStation 2. The developers went about as far as they could go on the PSX with MediEvil 2, so they're after fresh territory to conquer.

5. Sony decided that a market flooded with cover discs was hurting game sales overall, so now each country is only allowed one disc per month on an official magazine. This move is probably best for the market

## FREAKY QUESTION OF THE MONTH



Dear Gayming Magazine,

First of all, I have to say I love your mag. It is much better than those faggots at Ralph, with all their "Chicks you will never screw" and "How to shoot projectile vomit every time" articles. Screw them. They are doing nothing to advance the PlayStation community.

I'd also like to know, why do people make such thrice-damned awful piece of shit games? I shell out sixty bucks for a game, I think I have the right to expect a decent game.

Have you ever played the "Tomb Raider" series? I haven't. And I won't. It takes more than pyramid-like tits to draw me into a game. If you want to put sex in a game, RAM it in, HARD and with AUTHORITY, no PUSSY-footing around. Call the game "RootMaster 3000" and give it a XXX rating.

That's what I reckon.

Regards,

John Howard,  
Prime Minister of Australia

Hmmm. Glad to see politics finally coming to grips with the real issues of the day: Games.

The reason so many bad games are made is because most game designers couldn't tell their arse from their elbow. No big mystery. If any of our readers have any questions they'd like to ask little Johnny about the GST or anything else, apparently you can contact him at [PrimeMinister69@hotmail.com](mailto:PrimeMinister69@hotmail.com)

Unfortunately the "PM" forgot to include his postal address, so no freebies for him!









as a whole, and if it helps us sell our magazine, if only on the subject of price, all the better.

6. Very soon you can expect the prequel to Medal Of Honor, MOH Underground, on PlayStation. From there on out it's pretty slim pickings on the PSX since Unreal was cancelled, but we can still look forward to Unreal Tournament and Red Faction on the PlayStation2. UT is actually a launch title, in the US at least, so it could be as little as two months away. Let's just hope they don't port Daikatana. That would be a fate worse than death.

### Dear Station Magazine,

I, like many others am very interested in the forthcoming (October?) release of PS2 but I never expected it to be God's gift to console gaming. That honour can only rest with the games. After all the fluff I read from another magazine (that I never seem to have the motivation to pay for) it was a great relief to see an honest opinion on Sony's next big thing. But, there are some things that need to be cleared up...

1. Apart from poor marketing, I think another factor of the Dreamcast's performance was the price. \$499 was kinda scary compared to the PSX or N64 and probably scared some people off. With the PS2 at around \$599 - \$699 could this be a problem for Sony despite the new features?

2. Did backwards compatibility prevent Sony from having FOUR controller ports like every other system?

(I mean, it's just not fair to force us to spend \$60 extra for 4-player mode, \$120 for 8-player)

3. Did Sony cut off your CD supply too? Wouldn't surprise me if they did... (Besides, a playguide book makes for some riveting reading...)

4. Was it my imagination or is there something a little strange about the group photo on page 45 (Issue 13)?

5. Although not as bloody annoying as the "picture" on page 97...

6. In a perfect world, Nintendo and Sony would be able to share the worlds two finest publishing houses - Square and Rare. Looks like I'll have to get both systems again (not that it really bothers me).

Until next time,  
Shannon O'Brien

**A reader with a rational, hype-proof mind. What a refreshing change...**

1. New game systems always cost a lot at launch. The PlayStation debuted at \$699, and so did the Commodore 64, but in the long run the costs came down and they sold like gangbusters. Sega gambled that online console gaming would take off in the near future, and Sony are gambling that people will want gaming and DVD on the same machine. Time will tell which is the better tack.

2. They're probably more concerned about manufacturing costs. Don't forget that the PS2 modem add-on will see you playing multiplayer games with people around the world. That said, the two-port policy is a little cheap.

3. Yes. That's fine with us, you'll note we're now half the price of the competition.

4. That's correct. Troy shaved his head for that shot.

5. The article was about how we're all sick of Lara. That picture lent excellently to this view, don't you think?

6. The best games are always spread across different systems. Besides, under the heel of oppressive licensing arrangements, Square and Rare have been able to specialise on their assigned consoles, rather than trying to make second rate games that could be easily ported. This is good for all concerned, no?

### Dear Australian Station,

Here are some new game titles with a new twist. Some are easy, others are hard but try them anyway!

Teen Tag Tournament  
Alumina 2  
Cupped Arachnida  
Cesser  
Biscuit Abash Special  
Cayman 2  
Cantilena  
Almonries

And some game characters...

Alar Croft  
Nina Billions  
Buzz Bligher  
Pyro

And finally would you believe your former Ed was...

Even Cheating

Thank goodness we still have...

James Coatee  
Cantal Bailee  
Almost Dong  
Either Talent  
and...  
Aaron Ali

to get us though!

enough of that though, long live the Placating 2!

Chanson Brie

P.S. This whole letter (including my name was spellchecked for security reasons!)

I liked your idea for a game set on the Cayman Islands. You could play a crooked businessman, say "Alan Skase" who could launder his money, shelter from tax and push his dad off a yacht. You could also have a game set in Singapore where you pirate software and lock up dissidents, and one set in Ireland where you drink Guinness and blow stuff up. Hey, I can feel a franchise coming on...

### Hi Oz Station people-

Am I really so alone?  
Am I truly going crazy this time?





Did Australian Station truly give Gran Turismo 2 a score of 9/10 in its May Buyer's Guide (Issue 12, pg.91)?

Hasn't anybody noticed? Gran Turismo 2 is more than two steps down from its predecessor.

I speak as a big fan of the original Gran Turismo, who spent hours trying to pass the incredibly challenging license tests, building my way up from a Honda Civic to a Turbo Charged GT01 was completely absorbed, even obsessed by this amazing game. So when GT2 was on its way, I couldn't wait. I expected big things from this sequel, better visuals, better soundtrack (come on, that wouldn't be too hard would it?), maybe an improved game structure.

I get the sprawling two disc monster home, put it in the PlayStation breathlessly, wonder at the strange unearthly beauty of the opening sequence, get on to the grid for Tahiti Road- and what's this? It's chunky, mama, justa like Toca Touring Cars. Oh well, it may just be this track, but what's this? All the other cars bunch together- the field doesn't spread out at all, I can't get any kind of lead on them, or if I do, one false move and I'm back at sixth



position. Uh-oh, my Lotus Esprit is being over-taken by a Nissan Micra. What kind of programming is this? They're apparently using the Annoying Stick engine.

In spite of everything, I go on to win the Sunday cup, and - what's this? No bonus prize money for winning the competition? How will I ever save up a million credits for a special model car at this rate? It obviously won't be until the PlayStation 2, itself, is obsolete.

Okay, let's try out two player mode. Huh? car two does not steer! No, I am pressing the buttons. I am trying to miss the walls! There's no control!

So there are more tracks, more cars. Well let's bear in mind the adage, "less is more". Better a solid single album than a double CD set half-filled with dross. Sure, produce lots of tracks, lots of cars, but then narrow it down, refine it, hone it into a first class game. Think of Michaelangelo "finding" the David inside the lopsided block of marble. Don't you all see what's going on here, what a clever marketing ploy has been pulled off? Gran Turismo 2 is actually the in-development prototype version of Gran Turismo! We've all been sucked in!

As an independent magazine, you guys should take a leaf out of the Democrats' book, and try to "keep the Sonys honest"! If Australian Station won't protect us, who will?

Unjay  
Exeter, South Australia

We do our best, Unjay, but we have to be fair to all games and portray them in a fair and objective light, unbiased by our own prejudice.

Kevin gave GT2 93 per cent in his review in issue 10, and if you read his text you'll see that he gave a very balanced report on the game's strengths and weaknesses.

While the product itself may well be not nearly as original as the first game, and as you put it, is as a rough block of marble compared to GT's chiselled features, It has been one of the top selling games in the country since it launched. Go figure.

## LETTER OF THE MONTH

This month's winner receives a Dual Force Steering Wheel!



Hi guys,

I am a bit concerned with the state of PlayStation gaming as it is currently.

It seems that there is little or no innovation to be seen anywhere. Every game seems to be just a slight variation on an existing genre.

Fighting games, adventures, shooters, dancing games, it's all been done before. So my question is this: can we expect to see any new genres in PSX gaming in the future? And why is there so little innovation? Is it because of technology-related limitations, lazy developers, or is it simply a case of big companies just copying other successful games? If the PlayStation is to have any future, surely the games have to get better (and by that I don't mean simply improving the graphics and rendering). I for one would hate to see Tekken 9 or Tomb-Raider 14 being pushed as "the latest and greatest game" a few years from now.

Yours  
Sincerely,

Benji  
Flom  
Euroa, Victoria

This trend you've noticed has been around throughout the entire history of video games. It's most evident at the moment because we're nearing the end of the industry's "five year cycle." The PSX and the N64 have been out for about five years a piece now, and while there was a burst of innovation in each consoles infancy, things quickly stagnated into a mire of sequels and knock-offs, to say nothing of ports and retro collections. Still, the recent release of the Dreamcast has given rise to a new burst of innovation with games like Power Stone and Crazy Taxi, and we can expect the same with the release of the PS2. Of course, in 2005 you'll be writing us a similar letter to complain about Munch's Mega Hassle and Oni 2069, but them's the breaks.



# HELpStation

## MISS NURSE WANTS YOU!

Can't find the magic glowing rabbit to get past the third squid boss in the underwater city? Stuck in the boiler room of the old factory? Do you require some level skip codes and invincibility cheats to feel like a real PlayStation success? Write to Ms Nurse. She may just help you!



WRITE TO: MISS NURSE

78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW, 2016  
Surry Hills NSW Australia 2010

Email: playstation@next.com.au

## ALIEN TRILOGY

### LEVEL SELECT

Get into the carnage quicker with this code. At the password screen, enter "GOLVL" followed by the level you desire. (i.e., "GOLVL14" for level 14.) The words "Cheat Enabled" will appear if you did this properly.

### ULTIMATE CHEAT

For all weapons, unlimited firepower, invincibility and access to every level, enter the password 1G0TP1NK8C1DBOOTSON.

## BATTLETANX: GLOBAL ASSAULT

### NEW GANG: BRANDON

Use the password SMSLNG

### NEW GANG: CASSANDRA

Use the password NSTYGR

### SELECT ANY LEVEL

Use the password BCKDR

### UNLOCK ALL TANKS

Use the password THRNT

### UNLOCK ALL WEAPONS

Use the password SRTHMB

## CENTIPEDE

### CHEAT MODE

To activate cheat mode, pause the game and press: L1 (x2), L2, L1, Start. Thereafter, invincibility is enabled when the player has an odd number of lives.

(Note: For an extra life, pause the game and press d-pad Right.)

## DUKES OF HAZARD- RACING FOR HOME



## COLONY WARS RED SUN

### ENTER CHEAT SCREEN

In order to access the cheat option, go to the Magenta Station screen and press the following buttons:

R2, R2, L2, L2, R1, R1, Select, Select.

### WEAPONS PASSWORD

Enter Armoury at the Enter Cheat Screen.

## DUKES OF HAZARD - RACING FOR HOME

### BEATING BLACK JACK

In Episode 7, Scenes 1, 2, and 3, you can go ahead of younger Black Jack, but not too far. You can beat him to where he needs to go (listen to Luke to tell you when you need to turn).

### EXTRA POWER-UPS

Collect a power-up, then leave that place and return. The power-up will still be there and may be collected again. The maximum number of nitros that may be collected is five.

### KEEP LUKE HANGING OUT OF THE WINDOW

While Luke is hanging out of the window drive slower, or he will go back inside the car. If you hit anything he will go back inside.

### LEVEL SELECT...THE HARD WAY

Finish the game, then save it to a memory card. Load the game from the options/memory card screen to chose any episode and scene. Choose quit to the main menu and save the game again at the options/memory card screen.

### LOSING THE POLICE

When being chased by the police, you can cut them off by hitting them on the back when they try to cut you off.

## FRONT MISSION 3

### PLAY WITH YOUR BATTLE SKILLS

When you beat Emma's or Alisa's story line. Wait until after the credits and you can save your game at a final save point. Then the title screen comes up. Load your

## JACKIE CHAN'S STUNTMASTER



memory card file into the game. You are allowed to play the other or same story line with all the Battle Skills you learned in your previous game file.

### SPECIAL WEAPON

In the Alisa missions, after mission 46 go to the ArmoredK web site and check out BBS 3. At the bottom there is a number(555-XKR-224). Then go to the Auspend Garbagepit. There should be something called the Infernal Dialer. Dial this number in and you will recieve the parts to a Hoshun Mk112 and a laser weapon. You must then put it together and upgrade it. It is the best wazer in the game!



## JACKIE CHAN'S STUNTMASTER

### MOVIE MODE

Simply collect 20 Dragons to unlock the movie option.

## JEREMY MCGRATH SUPERCROSS '98

### AUTOMATIC RELOAD

To have your last save reload automatically when you turn on the game, save your rider with the name McGrath.

### BACKWARD TRAILS

To race the tracks in reverse, enter your name as SHOWTIME.

### BONUS BIKE

To get the M80cc you must win first place of a season on intermediate.

### DONUTS

While driving, stop, press and, hold X, Circle, and one of the turning buttons to do a donut. To do a faster donut, hold the same buttons with the wheelie button.

### MIRROR MODE

Win the season in the reverse mode to enable mirror mode.

### PLAYING TIPS

One tip that is probably the most important is that you should always hold the Nitro button (R2) while





# HELPSTATION

## NEED FOR SPEED: PORSCHE 2000



you are driving in straightaways. You do not need to slow down going into corners because the game has really easy turning.

To get better jumps, hold R2 while going up a ramp. Just before you fly off let go of R2. You will jump a lot farther and higher.

To make the computer opponents wreck, get right next to them and hold R2, then swerve and hit them. They will always fall off. Do not do it from behind because you will wreck.

### SUPER BIKE

Go to the main menu screen and then press, square, circle, up, down, right, and x. Then go to any kind of race except championship and you will have a 700cc Yamaha.

### LEGO RACERS

#### FLY MODE AND UNLOCK ROCKETCAR

Enter BUILD mode and create or edit a driver. Select Make A License from the in-game menu and name the driver FLYSKYHGH. This will also unlock the rocket car.

#### NO CHASSIS AND FAST MODE

In the licence screen type:

**NCHSSS** - no chassis

**FSTFRWRD** - fast mode

To use more than one code enter one code, exit, start a race, quit, go back, enter the next code, and repeat until you have all the codes you want. Using this you can have flying drivers with rocket engines.

### MARVEL VS. CAPCOM

#### CHANGE RYU TO KEN OR AKUMA

Select Ryu as your character. After reaching level 1 perform his hurricane kick(half moon)but instead of pressing a kick press the following buttons:

- **High Punch** - Change to Akuma
- **Medium Punch** - Change to Ken
- **Low Punch** - Change to Ryu

### EXTRA OPTIONS

Go to the main menu then highlight the options menu and press and hold (select) then press (start) This option will allow you to max the level of your ex bar and many more.

### MEDIEVAL II

#### ULTIMATE CHEAT MENU

This little trick will allow you to do all sorts of cool things in the game such as skipping a level, being invincible, adding health or items, increasing your head size, and more. To do it, first pause the game. Then enter the following button sequence:

Hold L2 and then press the following buttons in this order: Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Left, Circle, Up, Down, Right, Circle, Left, Left, Triangle, Right, Circle, Left, Left, Triangle, Circle, Down, Circle, Circle, Right.

#### (TO TOOT LOUD ROLL TROLL TO DOOR)

Once that is done, you will have access to the cheat menu, which is found in the pause screen.

### NEED FOR SPEED: PORSCHE 2000

#### UNLOCK ALL CARS

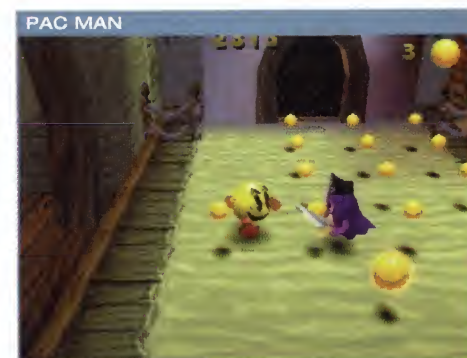
To be able to drive all the cars in the game, enter your name as "allporsche"



### PAC MAN WORLD 20TH ANNIVERSARY

#### EXTRA CONTINUES

Choose classic at the main screen and instead of pressing start to begin a round press select over and over for up to 99 continues





# HELPstation

## SUIKODEN II



## PONG



## PONG

### ACCESS EVERYTHING IN THE GAME

When you are at the Zone select screen pause the game and then hold down L1 R1 L2 R2 Then return to the zone select and you will have everything.

### UNLOCK ALL LEVELS

At the zone 1 selection screen, pause and enter: L1,R1,L1,R1, then resume the game.

## THE SMURFS

### LEVEL SELECT

Select "New Game" and then "It's no picnic" difficulty. Press X and on the next screen, after the video, enter L1, Up, Up, Down, Up, Left, Left, Up, R2.

## SOVIET STRIKE

### CHEAT CODES

Enter these codes at the password screen.

### PASSWORD

ANGRYLOCAL	People follow you everywhere
GHANDI	Natives worship your chopper
QUAKER	World peace (no shooting)
DAVEDITHER	More powerful weapons
DRBENWAY	Double damage
MOUNTADEW	Unlimited fuel
IAMWOMAN	Infinite armor
THEBIGBOYS	Unlimited ammo, fuel, and attempts
SADISSA	4 attempts
NOSFERAT	7 attempts
STRANGELUV	Infinite ammo
EARTHFIRST	Infinite fuel
VULTURE	Double fuel mileage
FUGAZI	Infinite ammo, infinite fuel, infinite attempts

### MIDNIGHOIL

Infinite ammo, infinite fuel, invincible chopper

### WORSTCASE

Level 1

### GRANDTHEFT

Level 2

### GROZNEY

Level 3

### CHERNOBYL

Level 4

### CIVILWAR

Level 5

### EFFECT

### INFINITE LIVES

For infinite lives, enter any level password, but don't press Start. Instead, press Triangle to clear your entry and then type "ELVISLIVES".

## STREET SK8ER 2

### CHANGE CHARACTER CLOTHING

When selecting character press and hold L1, L2, R1, or R2

Max out Player's status/trick level

L1 - Square - Left - Left - R2 - Left - R1 - Left

### UNLOCK ALL BOARDS

Circle - Circle - Square - Circle - Square - Square - Circle - R1

### UNLOCK ALL CHARACTERS

Left - Left - Circle - Circle - L2 - Square - Right - R2

### UNLOCK ALL TRACKS

Left - Right - Left - Right - Circle - Circle - R1 - Square

### UNLOCK VIEW MOVIES MENU ITEM

R2 - R2 - L1 - L2 - L1 - R1 - R1 - R1

## SUIKODEN II

### BEST ENDING

To get the best ending, you must have all 108 characters before you talk to Shu about the Rockaxe mission. Also when you near the end of Rockaxe Castle, when Nanami jumps out to protect you from Gorudo, you must answer very quickly (doesn't matter which answer you choose). If you did this correctly, after Dr. Huan reports of her unfortunate condition, he should ask to talk to Shu in private.

Did all that? Alright, then once you've beaten the game, head back to Tenzan Path (northwest of Kyrar) and return to that place by the waterfall. Jowy's there, of course, and you'll go into a duel with him. Just keep on defending throughout it. After that, he'll ask you to take his Black Sword Rune. Keep on refusing. Once you've refused enough, Leknaat will appear. I won't spoil the rest, but those are the requirements for getting the best ending.

### EARLY LEVEL UP TRICK

When you are spying on the Highland camp, at the end you get attacked by Highland soldiers. After you beat them, Jowy will hold them off while you run to Nanami. When you reach her, you fight more Highlands (use Bright Shield to defeat them easily). After that she asks where Jowy is. Reply ".....", and more Highlands appear. After the battle she asks you again. Keep replying "....." to fight more Highlands every time. Keep using Bright Shield until it runs out, then use Flaming Arrows from the fire rune. After the runes run out, use Family Attack on the one with the spear and just attack the rest. (if you're not around level 20 this can be difficult) Anyway, the first couple battles should give close to 1000 experience each. Keep doing that until your levels are pretty high (or they stop giving you less than 100 experience).

### RANDOM NAME

When you are supposed to enter a name, press L1 + R1 or L2 + R2 to choose a name at random.

### RANDOM TELEPORTATION TRICK

When you get Viki in your group and ask her to teleport you somewhere, once in a while she will teleport you in the wrong place. One of which is a hidden room in Radat town. Here you'll find many nice items.

### RECRUIT TETSU

To recruit Tetsu get Alex (the item keeper) in your



# HELPERSTATION

group and when he sells fried tacos buy 3. Next go to Lakewest and keep giving them to your hero. Once you done that steam should start coming out of your hero. Then go and talk to Tetsu and he will ask if you like baths and answer I love baths then he will say somethings and will build a sauna for you. The sauna is where you enter in the front not by the bar.

## RECRUITING CLIVE TIP

When trying to recruit the 108 stars, make sure in Muse you talk to Clive. If you do not do this he will not appear in South Window and you can never get him

## URBAN CHAOS

### LEVEL SELECT

To choose any stage in the game, simply hold R1+L1+Start+Select at the title screen.

## VAGRANT STORY

Extra Human Class Experience for Weapons

Right after the Minotaur battle in the Wine Cellar, you can use a training dummy to practice your chain combos. This dummy counts as human experience on your weapons, so you can use it to built up that affinity.

## WWF SMACKDOWN

### PRE-SEASON REWARDS

By completing the following number of pre-seasons you can get different rewards:

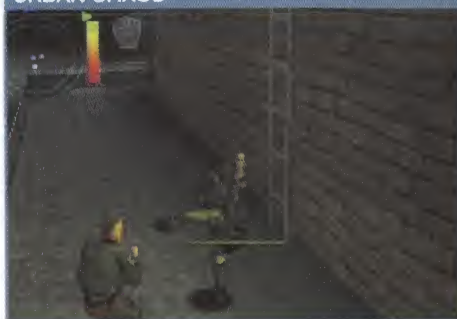
- 1 pre-season Weatlth
- 2 pre-seasons European Title and Ability
- 3 pre-seasons Women's Title and Ability
- 4 pre-seasons Tournament and Ability
- 5 pre-seasons Hardcore Title and Ability
- 6 pre-seasons IC Title and Ability
- 7 pre-seasons Tag Title and Ability
- 8 pre-seasons Title Match and Ability
- 10 pre-seasons Pre-season Skip
- Stage 6/House Show 3B Blue Meanie
- Stage 5/House Show 3A Steavie Richards
- Stage 58/House Show ED1 Alternate Stone Cold
- Stage 61/House Show ED4 Alternate The Rock
- Stage 65/House Show ED8 Stephanie McMahon

### SECRET WRESTLERS IN SEASON MODE...THE HARD WAY

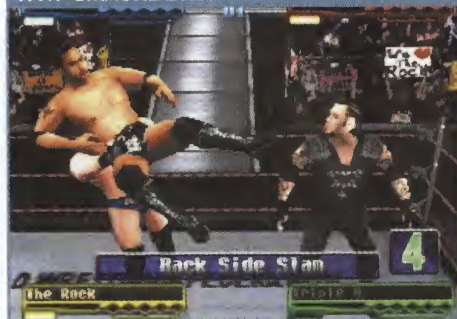
To unlock secret characters, you must play season mode for that # of years.

- Ivory (after 1 year)
- Prince Albert (2 years)
- Jacqueline (3 years)
- Viscera (4 years)
- Mideon (6 years)
- Gerald Brisco (7 years)
- Pat Patterson (8 years) Access other areas in the arena: To access other areas in the arena, press O (Irish Whip) near the entrance of the center area.

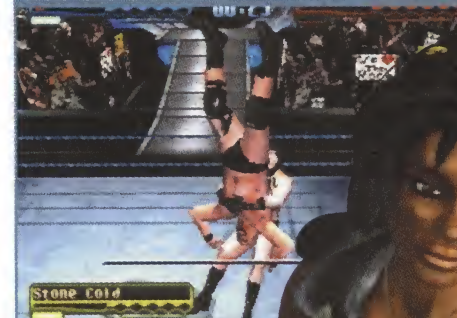
### URBAN CHAOS



### WWF SMACKDOWN



### WWF SMACKDOWN





# BUYER'S GUIDE

Station Magazine has formed the Buyer's Guide to give you, the reader, an idea about the games that have been released over recent months. Use this as a guide when buying your PlayStation software.

## STATION RECOMMENDATIONS: PLATFORM

1. Crash Bandicoot Warped (Platinum)	
Price:	\$39.95
Score:	95
2. Rayman (Platinum)	
Price:	\$34.95
Score:	98
3. Ape Escape	
Price:	\$69.95
Score:	100
4. Spyro 2	
Price:	\$39.95
Score:	90
5. Abe's Exoddus	
Price:	\$59.95
Score:	90



## STATION RECOMMENDATIONS: RPG

1. Final Fantasy 7	
Price:	\$39.95
Score:	100
2. Final Fantasy 8	
Price:	\$89.95
Score:	100
3. Alundra	
Price:	\$79.95
Score:	90
4. Wild Arms	
Price:	\$69.95
Score:	80
5. Vandal Hearts 2	
Price:	\$89.95
Score:	73



### ALUNDRA 2

PUBLISHER:	Activision
GENRE:	Action/RPG
PRICE:	\$89.95
SCORE:	85

Like most RPGs, Alundra takes a bit from a few other genres, notably platformers. It may be a strange mix but it's quite enjoyable.

### ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES

PUBLISHER:	Sony
GENRE:	3rd Person Shooter
PRICE:	\$59.95
SCORE:	81

The best of the Army Men games by far, this one actually has characters and a plot to justify the action. Good, injection-molded fun.

### COLONY WARS: RED SUN

PUBLISHER:	Sony
GENRE:	Space Combat
PRICE:	\$49.95
SCORE:	94

The best game of its type ever to grace the PlayStation. A space adventure tour-de-force!

### DISCWORLD NOIR

PUBLISHER:	GT Interactive
GENRE:	Adventure
PRICE:	\$79.95
SCORE:	53

A linear adventure game that is unsuited to PlayStation hardware and is a disservice to Terry Pratchett, who had nothing to do with this product.

### ARMY MEN 3D

PUBLISHER:	Sony
GENRE:	3rd Person Shooter
PRICE:	\$59.95
SCORE:	71

The easiest of the Army Men games, not much in the way of tactical sophistication or friendly graphics. It's rather Spartan really.

### BATTLE TANK GLOBAL ASSAULT

PUBLISHER:	Sony
GENRE:	Tank combat
PRICE:	\$59.95
SCORE:	72

Bare bones, no-nonsense tank action. Primitive graphics and little depth, but lots of multiplayer options and a refreshingly stupid plot.

### CRICKET 2000

PUBLISHER:	EA Sports
GENRE:	Cricket
PRICE:	\$79.95
SCORE:	48

No test match option, horrible graphics, pathetically unrealistic game physics and Shane Warne Cricket '99 being really good make Cricket 2000 a must-miss.

### FIGHTER MAKER

PUBLISHER:	Agetec
GENRE:	Fighting
PRICE:	\$79.95
SCORE:	31

This design-your-own-fighting-game has an atrocious pre-made fighting game included, as well as an agonisingly complex custom mode.

### ARMY MEN: OPERATION MELTDOWN

PUBLISHER:	Sony
GENRE:	3rd Person Shooter
PRICE:	\$59.95
SCORE:	76

Uses the same game engine as 3D, but is set in the Pacific theatre of WW II. More simplistic action abounds, occasionally with real tactics

### COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2

PUBLISHER:	Ozisoft
GENRE:	Rally driving
PRICE:	\$89.95
SCORE:	94

High levels of realism, gorgeous graphics and satisfying long term play make this the best rally driving game yet for PlayStation.

### CRUSADERS OF MIGHT AND MAGIC

PUBLISHER:	Sony
GENRE:	3rd Person Adventure
PRICE:	\$59.95
SCORE:	22

Hack n' slash dungeon crawling action, marred by horrible graphics and a dated, unimaginative setting.

### GAUNTLET LEGENDS

PUBLISHER:	Ozisoft
GENRE:	Beat 'em up
PRICE:	\$89.95
SCORE:	70

This is a worthy successor to the ancient arcade classic, but unfortunately only supports up to two player gaming.



## STATION RECOMMENDATIONS: FIGHTING

1. Tekken 3 (Platinum)  
Price: \$39.95  
Score: 95
2. StreetFighter Zero: 3  
Price: \$89.95  
Score: 90
3. Bushido Blade  
Price: \$69.95  
Score: 97
4. Dead or Alive  
Price: \$69.95  
Score: 81
5. Soul Blade (Platinum)  
Price: \$39.95  
Score: 90



### GEKIDO

PUBLISHER: Ozisoft  
GENRE: Beat 'em up  
PRICE: \$79.95  
SCORE: 53

Gaudy graphics, grindingly repetitive music, uninspiring bonus modes, and some rather amateurish production values make this one to avoid.

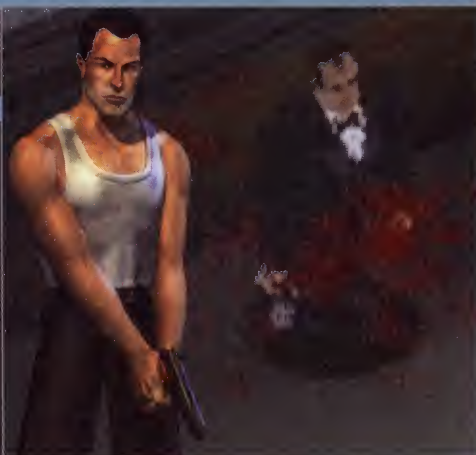
### JACKIE CHAN STUNTMASTER

PUBLISHER: Sony  
GENRE: Beat 'em up  
PRICE: \$59.95  
SCORE: 65

A good beat 'em up with some diverse play mechanics tainted by some terminally boring level design.

## STATION RECOMMENDATIONS: ACTION

1. Jedi Power Battles  
Price: \$89.95  
Score: 86
2. Die Hard Trilogy 2  
Price: \$79.95  
Score: 80
3. Driver (Platinum)  
Price: \$49.95  
Score: 90
4. GTA 2  
Price: \$89.95  
Score: 90
5. Medieval (Platinum)  
Price: \$39.95  
Score: 90



## STATION RECOMMENDATIONS: ADVENTURE

1. Metal Gear Solid (Platinum)  
Price: \$49.95  
Score: 100
2. Resident Evil 3  
Price: \$89.95  
Score: 90
3. Tenchu  
Price: \$49.95  
Score: 80
4. Silent Hill  
Price: \$89.95  
Score: 80
5. Syphon Filter  
Price: \$69.95  
Score: 90



### JEDI POWER BATTLES

PUBLISHER: Playcorp  
GENRE: Fighting  
PRICE: \$89.95  
SCORE: 86

Scrolling beat 'em ups are a dying breed so it's great to see the genre resurrected by this faithful conversion of the Star Wars movie. It's challenging and it even boasts two player action - just great!

### MARVEL VS. CAPCOM

PUBLISHER: Ozisoft  
GENRE: Fighting  
PRICE: \$89.95  
SCORE: 83

All your Capcom favourites taking on the Marvel Comics superheroes in a pyrotechnic battle to the death. Capcom fighters don't get much better than this, baby.

### MICRO MANIACS

PUBLISHER: Ozisoft  
GENRE: Racing  
PRICE: \$79.95  
SCORE: 88

Anyone after some quirky, retro styled racing action may find a lot to like here but just make sure you're not expecting Gran Turismo 3.

### MIDNIGHT IN VEGAS

PUBLISHER: Sony  
GENRE: Gambling Sim  
PRICE: \$59.95  
SCORE: 57

Highly accurate, yet highly dull gambling simulator. Comes with bonus lounge music CD. For gambling wonks only.

### MIGHTY HITS SPECIAL

PUBLISHER: Jack Of All Games  
GENRE: Shooting  
PRICE: \$69.95  
SCORE: 65

A competent enough light gun game, but not as good as either of the Point Blank games, and definitely only for little kids.

### MUPPET RACEMANIA

PUBLISHER: Sony  
GENRE: Kart Racing  
PRICE: \$49.95  
SCORE: 76

If you're old enough to be buying your own games then Crash Team Racing is a much better alternative but if you've run out of pacifiers for your toddlers then

this might be the trick

### NFS: PORSCHE 2000

PUBLISHER: EA  
GENRE: Racing  
PRICE: \$79.95  
SCORE: 81

More of the same. Unlock a whole bunch of Porsches through history and observe how the Need For Speed games keep getting worse.

### N-GEN RACING

PUBLISHER: Ozisoft  
GENRE: Racing  
PRICE: \$79.95  
SCORE: 67

Race jet fighters at breakneck speed. Despite the novel approach, there's just not enough reward for your effort, especially when games like Rollcage and Wipeout exist.

### PSYCHIC FORCE 2

PUBLISHER: Jack Of All Games  
GENRE: Fighting  
PRICE: \$89.95  
SCORE: 68

3D fighting with characters suspended in mid-air and hurling psionic pyrotechnics at each other. Unfortunately, bad graphics and sound are accompanied here by sub-par gameplay.

### RALLY MASTERS

PUBLISHER: Ozisoft  
GENRE: Rally driving  
PRICE: \$89.95  
SCORE: 53

This is a sub-standard racing effort, with needlessly limiting options, laughable graphics and many better games in the genre to attract your cash.

### RESCUE SHOT

PUBLISHER: Sony  
GENRE: Shooting  
PRICE: \$59.95  
SCORE: 77

Yet another G-Con treat from Namco. This light gun game, due to its short length, low difficulty and storybook presentation is best suited for younger players.



## RESIDENT EVIL: GUN SURVIVOR

**PUBLISHER:** Ozisoft  
**GENRE:** Shooting  
**PRICE:** \$89.95  
**SCORE:** 40

This game will scare you but for all the wrong reasons. The idea of using a light gun is good but the gameplay is just so sluggish and dull.

## ROLLCAGE STAGE 2

**PUBLISHER:** Psygnosis  
**GENRE:** Racing  
**PRICE:** \$49.95  
**SCORE:** 92

This sequel is easily one of the best racers out there. It gives the Wipeout series a serious challenge for the speediest experience on the system.

## SPACE DEBRIS

**PUBLISHER:** Sony  
**GENRE:** Space Shooter  
**PRICE:** \$89.95  
**SCORE:** 58

Very predictable and unrewarding gameplay makes for an unnecessary addition to an already overcrowded genre.

## STAR INIOM

**PUBLISHER:** Sony  
**GENRE:** Space Shooter  
**PRICE:** \$59.95  
**SCORE:** 40

A very poor space shooter with limited role playing elements that only serve to prolong the agony between the fleeting moments of genuine action.

## STREETFIGHTER EX 2

**PUBLISHER:** Ozisoft  
**GENRE:** Fighting  
**PRICE:** \$89.95  
**SCORE:** 60

The 2D versions of Streetfighter may have barely progressed at all in the last decade but at least they started with a solid basis. This is just crap.

## SYPHON FILTER 2

**PUBLISHER:** Sony  
**GENRE:** 3rd Person Shooter  
**PRICE:** \$69.95  
**SCORE:** 88

The brilliant stealth-based action has returned in this sequel and so long as all you want is more of the same, then you'll be very happy.

## VAGRANT STORY

**PUBLISHER:** Sony  
**GENRE:** RPG  
**PRICE:** \$69.95  
**SCORE:** 92

This is a dungeon crawling adventure full of hacking and slashing, not to mention an awesome combat system. One of the most addictive games we've seen in ages.

## URBAN CHAOS

**PUBLISHER:** Ozisoft  
**GENRE:** 3rd Person Adventure  
**PRICE:** \$89.95  
**SCORE:** 60

Allowing you to drive, shoot and bash your way through an army of criminals in a huge city sounds good on paper, but messy control issues destroy this game's potential

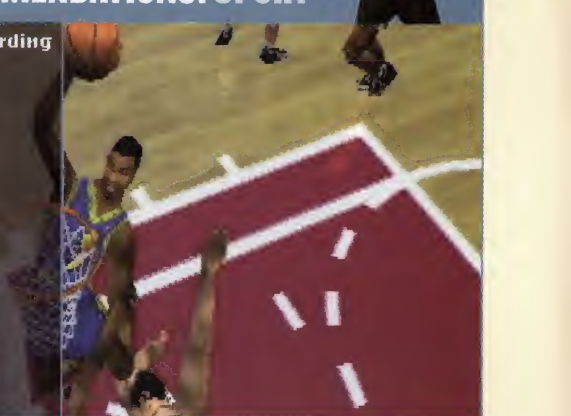
## STATION RECOMMENDATIONS: MULTIPLAYER/PUZZLE

1. Worms: Armageddon  
Price: \$89.95  
Score: 100
2. Crash Team Racing  
Price: \$79.95  
Score: 100
3. Devil Dice  
Price: \$59.95  
Score: 80
4. Bust a Move 4  
Price: \$89.95  
Score: 80
5. Micro Maniacs  
Price: \$79.95  
Score: 88



## STATION RECOMMENDATIONS: SPORT

1. Tony Hawk Skateboarding  
Price: \$49.95  
Score: 100
2. NBA Live 2000  
Price: \$89.95  
Score: 90
3. Shane Warne Cricket  
Price: \$49.95  
Score: 90
4. Cool Boarders 3  
Price: \$39.95  
Score: 80
5. FIFA 2000  
Price: \$79.95  
Score: 100



## WWF SMACKDOWN

**PUBLISHER:** GT Interactive  
**GENRE:** Wrestling  
**PRICE:** \$79.95  
**SCORE:** 85

After a drought of decent wrestling games it's great to see Smackdown combining THQ's great grappling method with these sexy, new graphics.



## STATION RECOMMENDATIONS: RACING

1. Wip3out Special Edition  
Price: \$49.95  
Score: 80
2. Colin McRae Rally (Platinum)  
Price: \$49.95  
Score: 90
3. Ridge Racer: Type 4  
Price: \$39.95  
Score: 80
4. Gran Turismo (Platinum)  
Price: \$39.95  
Score: 100
5. Toca: Touring Car  
Price: \$39.95  
Score: 90



## STATION RECOMMENDATIONS: SHOOTING

1. Quake 2  
Price: \$89.95  
Score: 90
2. Final Doom  
Price: \$39.95  
Score: 90
3. Point Blank 2  
Price: \$59.95  
Score: 90
4. Time Crisis  
Price: \$39.95  
Score: 90
5. Omega Boost  
Price: \$59.95  
Score: 80





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# the CRITICS' CIRCLE

This is where the crew at Australian Station takes a more serious look at the world of PlayStation. The Critics' Circle is a forum where we discuss hot and/or topical issues that affect your enjoyment in PlayStation gaming. This month, we take a look at some of the more sloppy elements of game design.

## YOU LOOK KIND OF FAMILIAR, HAVE WE MET BEFORE?

One of the most often quoted facts about the PlayStation is the number of games available for it. While this now exceeds 700 in Australia (and over 2500 in Japan), not many of them come to mind straight away, do they? Not many of them stand out. And one would certainly never even consider buying them all.

The reason is because most of them are bad. Terribly bad. Not the kind that scars you for life, but just vast morass of semi-digestible dross that offers nothing to the evolution of gameplay, nothing to the growth of the industry, and nothing at all to the player. The low average quality of games is something that has baffled the general public since the dawn of time.

The reasons are obvious, and are only going to get worse as time goes on. Foremost is the blockbuster effect. The game industry is getting more like Hollywood

every day, and if a game is to make money in the marketplace these days it has to make a big splash. The huge development budgets required to catch the public's attention scare executive types, who want to ensure that any game they pour millions into making is based on bankable ideas, and thus more likely to succeed.

Thus the pattern is emulation, not innovation. Maybe one game in fifty breaks new ground, then all the other developers swarm in to out-do them. Games have tried to out-Tony Hawk Tony Hawk, and to out-Tekken Tekken, and their failure has only cheapened the general public's opinion of gaming in general. Sloppy, unimaginative product is no good for anyone, and it's a paradox that haunts every video gamer to the day they die that so much money is spent every day on terrible games.

## PRIME SUSPECTS?

### FORMULAEIC LEVEL DESIGN

Find the key. Open the door. Find the next key. Open another door. Fight twenty identical guys called "ninja." Kill their boss. Start over. All too many games these days display a technique that was looking pretty shaky 20 years ago, that of a series of repetitive levels masquerading as a game. If a joke isn't funny, saying it a hundred times isn't going to change the matter. The same goes for boring game mechanics. If you didn't get any jollies from level one, why should you expect level 99 to be any different?

Vampire Hunter D



### UNLOCKING THINGS

In Chess, you don't start off with a few pawns and a bishop and a burning desire to win a thousand times so you can unlock the queen. You get a wonderfully designed game cut from the whole cloth right from the start. If a game is unimaginative, repetitive, AND constrained by the fact you have to play it a zillion times in the hope that maybe, somehow, it'll get better, it's a poor showing for the developer responsible. In Bishi Bashi Special you can play all the mini-games straight away, and the game's fantastic!

Bishi Bashi Special



### BRAZEN PORTING

Just because a game works on one platform, doesn't mean it will be a dead cert for success on the PlayStation. Different game systems have different strengths and weaknesses, and it's rare when a game developer bothers to customise a ported versions parameters to suit its new home. For instance, a game ported from the Nintendo 64 may have little or no music, no voice overs, no cut scenes and rather sparse environments, and a game ported from the PC will typically be a pale shadow of its former self.

Armorines









# NEXT EDITION



**OBSERVE WHAT AWAITS YOU  
IN NEXT MONTHS'S ISSUE OF  
STATION!**

## **TONY HAWK 2**

Tony Hawk Skateboarding has been one of the hottest selling titles in the country for the past year, and for good reason. It's the best skateboarding game out there, and an epic achievement in its own right. Well, it's about to get better. With new moves, improved mechanics, and modes where you can design your own skaters and skate parks, this is going to be a must-buy for every skating fan on the planet!

## **TENCHU 2**

When Tenchu first came out it blew us away with its incredible stealthy gameplay, groovy weapons and spectacular gore. It's a game you can pick and play a year after you've bought it, which is just as well because the anticipation for this mega-prequel is almost unbearable. With more ninja gadgets, lethal moves and sheer style than ever before, Tenchu 2 is going to be September's other must-have.

## **RAYMAN 2**

It's been almost five years since the first Rayman, but this sequel is going to hit the PlayStation world like an atom bomb. We've seen it in action, and the lavish 3D environments achieve levels of graphical splendor previously thought impossible! It's stacks of fun to play too! Rayman 2 will be a must-see for adventure game fans, the young, and anyone who can appreciate French exuberance.

## **ALSO COMING NEXT MONTH:**

TOCA World Touring Cars, Sydney 2000, Infestation, Chase The Express, Team Buddies, and much, much more!



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